'RELIGIO LAICI' JUDAICA

'For *my* salvation must its doom receive,
Not from what *others*, but what *I* believe.'

DRYDEN, *Religio Laici.*

'RELIGIO LAICI' JUDAICA

The Faith of a Jewish Layman

By

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Note

The following chapters—in part re-written from my contributions during the last few years to The Jewish Quarterly Review, The Fortnightly Review *and* The Jewish World, *with the kind consent of the several editors and proprietors—constitute, as a whole, a plea for moderate conservatism. As such, they may prove an acceptable addition to the literature of a conflict which is not confined to any one community and which is likely to become more acute before the bases of religion succeed in repelling the attack which now threatens its superstructure.*

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CHAPTER I

'Religio Laici' Judaica: A Conservative View

A RECENT movement in the Jewish community in London, and a recent book by one of its spiritual leaders[1], have imported a flavour of party politics into the affairs of Anglo-Jewry. If it is not altogether true to say with Mr Gilbert's hero that every little Jew or Jewess is born either a Liberal or a Conservative, it is at least apparent that these party names are acquiring a real and a somewhat urgent significance in that small but influential section of Jewish thought which has its seat in this country. The liberal case has been stated with singular lucidity and force in Mr Montefiore's volume; and if in these pages I attempt to state a more conservative point of view, it is partly because it seems to require

[1] *Liberal Judaism: an Essay.* By Claude G. Montefiore. Macmillan.

restatement in these times, and partly, too, because it is a good thing to try to justify to oneself views and opinions which one instinctively defends. The attempt need not take the form of a criticism of Mr Montefiore's book. But something will have to be said of the views which that book expressed, and it will be convenient to quote them in Mr Montefiore's own words. These do not, as he is at pains to remind us, commit any one else at all, either to the views themselves, or to the particular shape which he gives to them. At the same time, Mr Montefiore will have found a number of people to agree with him, and most of them, it is fair to assume, will be willing to accept his language as an adequate expression of their thought. In this sense, and, without violating Mr Montefiore's claim to speak about 'that particular and individualized form of Liberal Judaism' which he himself happens to hold, Liberal Judaism, as he interprets it, may be taken as a definite conception corresponding to a definite set of opinions, which are shared by a definite section of the community.

This means a good deal. It means all that

is implied, in journalistic language, by a ' parting of the ways ' and a ' crisis ' in affairs. It means that the Jewish community of England is dividing itself into two camps, the orthodox and reform, or the Conservative and Liberal, or the old and the new, for the classification is strangely familiar, and the simplest forms of expression are the best. Can the old beliefs put on their new clothes ? Can the Jew who conscientiously rejects the tradition of the inspiration of the Pentateuch attend the same public worship as the Jew who conscientiously accepts it ? Nay more, can the same name ' Jew ' continue to include them both ? Or does the so-called New Criticism set a bar between Jew and Jew, leaving the traditionalists to defend a lost cause and a forsaken belief—on the side of the angels, it may be, but of angels who have been superannuated—and placing the Liberals or Liberationists at the head of a movement of reconciliation in which, as precedent ordains, the sword is the instrument of peace ?

To many of us it will seem a pity if no *via media* is found. To many, again, it will seem imperative that no *via media* should

be found, for the disputes of theologians are beyond the remedy of compromise. But with these opinions, and their consequences, the present writer has no concern. There will never be wanting the advocates of dissension and destruction. There will never be wanting those adherents to a creed who find their expression in a perpetual protest. Religion has always been the fruitful mother of conflict. Perhaps, as the deepest emotion of which the human race is competent, it is subject in a peculiar degree to the universal law of competition. Religion, like teeming earth, feeds on its own decay. It recalls to a vivid imagination the slaughterous and parricidal habits of the gods in the old Greek myth. Orthodoxy produces Protestantism; Protestantism, Dissent; each devours, or is devoured by, its offspring—the martyrs of one generation are the tyrants of the next; victor and victim there must ever be on the road to Zion, as to Rome.

In any state of society which exists by internecine strife certain advantages attach inevitably to the winning side. This, again, is in accordance with natural law. Without

the assured enjoyment of victory's fruits there would be no heart in the fighting; and Protestants in religion have this, at least, on their side, that the brightness, the dash, the élan, the glamour of audacity and effort, are as necessarily and inalienably their perquisite as tail feathers adorn the peacock. 'They prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the Lord of Hosts.' But against this bare, bald statement of a claim must be set the fascination of novelty, and daring, and revolt—a fascination which is hardly correctly described and dismissed as meretricious, because it is an actual part of the natural process of development, and as such we must reckon with it and allow for it. In religious affairs, far more than in political, the Conservative case is severely penalized by nature. Changes which might frighten men in the conduct of the State, changes which might affect their purses, or unsettle their homes, or disturb their land-tenure, or otherwise touch their material interests, tend to attract them on the spiritual side by providing that grandest recipe for recreation—variety without re-

sponsibility. A certain personal trouble is involved in taking a holiday for the body. But the soul can enjoy a change of diet, and leave the consequences to others. Our spiritual nature, so to speak, and so speaking for the majority of mankind, is endowed with a vicarious digestion. We sing the psalms, and the Church does the rest. Accordingly, if certain Church dignitaries recommend a new form of psalm-singing, the mere novelty of which is an attraction in itself, many of us are quite content to transfer the responsibility as before, and to quicken our spiritual appetite by a change of diet and occupation. Then the Protestant leader is liable to commit the mistake of little great men, and to make an end of his means. The temptation to form a new sect, instead of reforming the old, is too often irresistible. Indeed, it would sometimes seem as if the universal church has to await the hour till it can come as a unanimous reaction against the multiplication of churches and the meticulous diversity of creeds.

There are signs of this process in the Jewish community, and the most dangerous sign of

all is the refusal to discuss it. Silent change is intolerable because it is so easy. The success of the corybantic method, as Huxley described it, will be increased tenfold if no sound is heard from without. More than this is involved in the matter. One hears so frequently to-day that this or that feature of religion 'does not appeal' to some seeker after spiritual rest that one tends to forget whose, after all, is the blame. This dispensation by default, this irresponsiveness in the worshipper, is not in itself a proof that the old creed is outworn. The cry for change finds an echo, and some may mistake the sound for an answer to their own prayers; variety, too, is a safe tonic, and the satisfaction of the patient is not always a symptom of disease. At least, it may fairly be urged that before throwing over the old forms some effort should be made to discover the secret of their vitality, and to determine whether this complaint, this tedium of the synagogue and its consecrated usages, is an indication of spiritual strength and intellectual awakening, or is merely a by-product of the forces of ignorance. There is no more plausible

weapon in the whole armoury of dialectics than the appeal to common sense. Common sense is the grandest demagogue, yet it is not to be trusted out of sight. The most excellent things in life—half its passions, and all its emotions—should listen to it, and pass by. The appeal from faith to reason, with the intellectual flattery it involves, is more often than not an appeal from light to darkness. *Gemeinsinn* is the cleverness of *das Gemeine*, and in affairs of the soul, as in affairs of the heart, common sense degrades, not exalts. There is only one thing more flattering than the appeal to common sense in a context of this kind, and that is the discovery of an unsuspected soul. Traditional, or conservative, Judaism to-day has to counteract both these subtle perils. It has to meet the intellectual peril, and overthrow it; it has to take account of the latent spiritual longing, and teach it to find satisfaction without prescribing invalid's food. In other words, it has to correct two rather morbid tendencies, the tendency to an undue respect for one's own intellectual doubts, and the tendency to an exaggerated care for the nice require-

ments of one's own soul. These tendencies it must show to spring from a defect of the intellect and an excess of the spirit. Judaism, as a religious system, demands in a high degree the quality of intellectual imagination, and it reduces nearly to a minimum the spiritual claims of the individual. There is no confessional in the synagogue ; salvation is administered in big doses ; and, mortifying as this may be to the self-esteem of the sickly soul, it yet seems to correspond to such imperfect observation as we are privileged to make of the Creator's relation to the world which he created for his praise. He does not interfere to save any one man among us from the consequences of his acts or from the exercise of his volition ; and public worship, if it express the homage of man to God, must, one would think, be satisfied with the revelation of God to man. The attempt to establish in the synagogue a form of ritual which shall admit a more intimate and personal communion between the worshipper and the Deity seems to the conservative Jew to contain the elements at least of a morbid and a Romanizing intention. It substitutes a private

for a public purpose. It directly encourages the hysteria of the confessional. It eviscerates Judaism, leaving the empty husks of ceremony and tradition in the place of the living fruits offered on the altar of the sanctuary.

All this is negation and invective. But something of this point of view must be stated at the outset of a conservative *apologia*. The most cherished feelings of the conservative Jew are outraged by such hypotheses as the following from Mr Montefiore's volume:

'The liberal Jew cannot regard the Law as the centre of Jewish belief and practice. If he were founding a public service *de novo*, he would not make the reading of the Law its central and most important feature. If he were building a synagogue, without reference to past custom, he would not put scrolls of the Law into an ark, and make that ark the most sacred part of the building. If he had such an ark, he would put in it the prophecies of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, rather than the Pentateuch, for the Prophets are more primary and more essential than the Law.'

'The prominent references to the Law in the liturgy can easily be given a new and different meaning by "liberal" worshippers.

To them the Law is no longer the Pentateuch, but the Moral Law, before whose majesty all men must bow. That is the Law to which they ask God to " open their hearts". That is the Law which they trust may " become pleasant in their mouths". Or, again, the Law is the will of God. That we may know and do God's will we ask him to grant us " understanding and discernment". Or the Law is the Hebrew Scripture as a whole, which still remains the formal and constituent charter of Judaism, and of which we may truly say, " Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast given it to us ". In these various ways, which, because they are freely acknowledged, are not sophistic or insincere, we may adapt the language of the liturgy to our own beliefs and aspirations.'

' There are persons who want to maintain the Jewish race quite apart from any religious consideration. There are some who would even go so far as to speak of the Jews as a " people " or a " nation ", and would desire to keep up, as they call it, the national idea. Such persons would object to intermarriage on purely " racial " or " national " grounds. There are others who combine these grounds with motives of religion. There are others, again, who, while by no means assenting to the theory that the Jews are a nation, have yet a sort of sentimental, unreasoned, atavistic feeling of race, and dislike the notion of inter-

marriage. With all these I am in disagreement. If it were not so, I should indeed be guilty of a contradiction when I desire the " denationalization " of Judaism, and support the counter theory of an " Englishman of the Jewish persuasion ". A man can only belong to one nation at a time. But, heart and soul an Englishman by nation, one can also be heart and soul a Jew by religion. But by religion only. The mere *race* is unimportant ; it has no influence upon action.'

The basis of all this reconstruction, this readjustment of the spiritual compass to an altered mental horizon, is placed in the alleged incompatibility of modern knowledge with traditional Judaism. The ' higher ' criticism of the Bible puts a definite stop to the uncritical standards of former generations. It is no longer admissible to say, ' What was true enough for my fathers is true enough for me.' Reason forbids so pusillanimous a surrender to tradition and sentiment. It proves that Moses never wrote the Pentateuch. At the touch of its analysis the fabric of the Mosaic Law crumbles into dust. Its new Bible is sprinkled with A's and B's and C's, like a kind of alphabetical index to its multiple

authorship; and, naturally enough, those who use this critical apparatus, or those more particularly who use it at second or third hand, think that their case is proved when they say, 'How can we repeat, "This is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel", when we know (1) that it is not the Law, and (2) that Moses did not promulgate it?' Liberal Judaism concedes these objections, and repairs its tenement accordingly. Certain passages of the Pentateuch it omits, as wholly inamenable to reason. Certain others it modifies in order to adapt them to reason; and others, again, it submits to a fresh interpretation, at the expense more often than not of their essential sap. By this process of selection and rearrangement it discovers ways round the Law, by which to evade or to transform its original obligations, and with the simple but ingenious device of stating that 'Moral' is *sous-entendu* whenever the Liturgy says 'Law', it provides a ready escape from inconvenient fetters. But 'Moral Law', we must all admit, is a phrase peculiarly susceptible of liberal interpretation; and if loyalty to the Jewish race

and observance of the Jewish religion can be satisfactorily acquitted by obedience to the moral law, and if the injunction to obey it is recommended by a compliment to the mental powers of the rational disciple, then we may close our arks or furnish them with tracts on Utilitarianism, and hold up to the congregation of Israel the admirable and demonstrable truths of Bentham and the younger Mill.

A pained surprise is sometimes expressed at the outer darkness in which we live, who have informed ourselves of the latest results of the researches of Biblical criticism, and who yet continue to uphold the authority of the Law, and to practise the religion of our forbears in the forms which it prescribes, as far as they are compatible with the conditions of modern life. The answer is that the two things have nothing to do with each other. It is the characteristic of liturgical language (conservative Judaism replies) to provide for emergencies of that kind. Liturgical language never pretends to scientific exactness, and when science comes along and proves it inexact, it readily admits the charge,

but claims, as it has always claimed, the quality of a higher truth than the truth of scientific demonstration. The problem was stated and solved, a generation ago, in Matthew Arnold's *Essay towards a better Apprehension of the Bible*. 'The language of the Bible', he wrote, 'is literary, not scientific, language; language *thrown out* at an object of consciousness not fully grasped, which inspired emotion. Evidently, if the object be one not fully to be grasped, and one to inspire emotion, the language of figure and feeling will satisfy us better about it, will cover more of what we seek to express, than the language of literal fact and science. The language of science about it will be *below* what we feel to be the truth.' To weigh language of this kind in the crucible of science is to apply, as Sir Leslie Stephen put it, 'a totally inappropriate test. . . . The churches', as Sir Leslie continued, not without a touch of irony, 'would escape a good many difficulties, and apologists a good deal of trouble, if they could boldly follow Arnold and say that they do not appeal to the reason, but to the imagination' (*Studies of a Biographer*, II, 118). The Jewish Church

need not hesitate to follow Arnold to this extent. It may go further and say that the function of religion is to appeal to the imagination, and that a religious system which failed to make that appeal, and which could be approved unexceptionally by human reason, is a system which omits the Unknown. And the Jewish Deity possesses that awful attribute of unknowableness. Conservative Judaism prefers, in the full exercise of its intelligence, and with eyes and ears all open, to leave something to the imagination. It uses figurative language consciously—deliberately, one might say—and with a keen sense of the added power which is thereby lent to expression. In this way even the much abused opening verses of *Genesis*, which the higher criticism expunges as wholly unreasonable and unacceptable, and which are omitted, accordingly, from the new Revised Version of its highly sensitive disciples, contain a truth and beauty distinct and distinguishable from the truth and beauty in their kind of the scientific theory of origins.

It is no part of my purpose to attempt a defence of the imagination, but it is interest-

ing at least to try, in quite untechnical language and doubtless very imperfectly, to describe what might be called the psychological process of belief in the mind of a religiously disposed man, to whom the obvious inaccuracy of the first chapter of *Genesis* does not in any wise impair its spiritual appeal to his religious emotions. We must suppose him standing in the position of the psalmist :

'When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ; what is man, that thou art mindful of him ?, and the son of man, that thou visitest him ?'

In other words, our Jew—our ideal synagogue-going Jew—is in a mood to realize the tremendous vastness of the universe, and his own immeasurable insignificance as a unit on the face of one planet. Yet, oppressed and awestruck as he is, he recovers to a certain extent his failing sense of self-respect by the reflection, which inevitably suggests itself, of a purpose and an order which have been imposed upon, or are discernible in, the chaos. Light and darkness, water and earth, seed and fruit, these display a distinctness and

regularity which even the infinitesimal unit—individual man—can plainly recognize and turn to his own uses. His terror is changing, accordingly, to a kind of wondering admiration, blent with which is the feeling that, within his own range of observation, all this orderly procession on a scale hardly conceivable to a finite intelligence is designed for, or has served, the growth of his own importance. Take the psalmist's reflection again :

'For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands ; thou hast put all things under his feet : all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field ; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.'

Note here how inevitable, to use a hackneyed word, is the psalmist's expression of his mood. Can any one, feeling those emotions, and seeking language to express them, speak more truthfully or more beautifully than the author of this psalm ? 'The work of thy fingers' is imaginative language, but is it therefore untrue ? Is it not the nearest approxi-

mation which a imperfect instrument can fashion to the conception which cries for utterance ? Can science, learned in all tongues, suggest a satisfactory substitute for *that thought in that mood* ? It is the language of humility, the language of adoring gratitude, in which the facts of observation, wherewith science is concerned, are transfigured by the light of imagination. And that light reveals a higher truth than the literal statement of the facts. It utters a truth which satisfies at once a more spontaneous, a more universal, and a more elevated demand of the mind than mere reason ever formulates. In the insoluble problem of the destiny of man, in which all speech is faltering, at least it reaches the level of what we feel to be the truth, below which, as Arnold says, the language of science falls. And, so reaching, it proves its own truth by its power to heal and to console. It is *the* expression which was sought for ; imagination can essay no higher flight.

Now, assuming this mood, and using the sole form of speech which can even approximately express it, let us try to write the story of creation. Does it not necessarily fall into

the moulds of the first chapter of *Genesis*? First the void, and the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. Then the various types of order, ascribed by a figure of language, accurately fashioned by the aid of the highest human imagination, to the Presiding Idea, the designing finger—God. 'And God called', 'And God said', 'And God set', 'And God created'—surely Reason would pull Truth down from her magnificent eminence if it reformed these symbols in accordance with scientific fact. Surely these phrases remain the supreme and perfect expression of those facts as grasped by imagination, and surely the language of science about them must altogether omit their emotional aspect with its claims on our adoration and our gratitude. Above all, the glorious refrain, 'And God saw that it was good', with its *crescendo* burst of music at the end, 'And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good', is an inseparable part of any account of creation which shall satisfy the emotions and the intellectual imagination of mankind. The burden of the universe can only be relieved in a religious mood by the

fervid statement of the truth, the fervid confession of the belief, that what is, is good. Art and poetry describe it as the impression of truth upon beauty, and of beauty upon truth; science cancels it altogether, as irrelevant to demonstration; but religion proclaims it from the first in language that carries its own conviction: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.' The days, as stages of this work, present no difficulty to belief. No one pretends that they are literal; no one disputes their truth on the ground of scientific inaccuracy. Facts, after all, are imponderable things, and reason is a shifting standard. It changes from year to year, from one generation to another. Facts are very far from the last word which the intellectual emotions can state to spiritual faith.

Whether the problem be attacked as one of verbal inspiration, or as one of the meaning of truth, it is equally illiberal, in my opinion, to presume to settle it on the spot. Transfer the argument for a moment to the

less controversial field of classical scholarship. Virgil wrote a line :

'Sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi ;
Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.'

This verse is rendered by Mr Frederick Myers :

'Tears waken tears, and honour honour brings,
And mortal hearts are moved by mortal things.'

Sir C. Bowen translates it :

'Tears are to human sorrow given, hearts feel for mankind.'

Wordsworth rewrote it :

'Tears to human suffering are due.'

Tennyson echoed it in his apostrophe to Virgil :

'Thou majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of humankind.'

Dr Henry, *optime de Marone meritus*, explains *rerum* as 'the world', and writes on the text that it forms 'a general reflection concerning human sympathy, viz. that tears are part of the constitution of nature, and to be met with wherever there are men.'

Professor Tyrrell declares that he is 'not sure that all its meaning has yet been fully unfolded.

. . . Surely in this famous verse Virgil meant more than Wordsworth in the *Laodamia*. . . Surely these words, which seem full of a natural magic, come to us with a diviner air and a grander message than this. . . . May not the words, which cannot but strike one as fraught with some new and exquisite fancy, bear a meaning far more definite, weighty, and distinguished? . . . E'en things inanimate (*res*, the material picture) can weep for us, and the works of men's hands (*mortalia*) have their own pathetic power.'

Dr Mackail, in his brilliant manual on *Latin Literature*, writes with a touch of mysticism: 'In the most famous of his single lines he speaks of the "tears in things"; just this sense of tears, this voice that always, in its most sustained splendour and in its most ordinary cadences, vibrates with a strange pathos, is what finally places him alone among artists.'

And so forth, and so forth. For the disputations of critics on this verse might be indefinitely quoted. *Res* may be rendered 'human sorrow', or 'the world', or 'inanimate things,' and Virgil's meaning in the verse may be

totally different from our own. He may have intended a general reflection on the constitution of the universe, or a specific comment on Aeneas looking at a picture. But the point of the analogy is that the credit in either case is Virgil's. In the process of the suns a newer and a deeper meaning may have been read into his verse. He remains triumphantly its author. He drew it from the well-spring of truth; its truth is his truth for ever. Though he may have been inspired with a message the full sense of which he did not understand, the verbal inspiration is unassailed. Similarly, if the Pentateuch contains verses which later ages invest with deeper meaning than they may originally have borne, it is still no falsehood to proclaim: 'This is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel.' The hidden meanings which are revealed are also a part of inspiration.

Let me take a homelier analogy to illustrate the problem of truth. I may say: 'This umbrella was given to me by So-and-so in such and such a year.' The stickler for facts comes along, and asks a series of questions. 'Has your umbrella been re-covered?'

'Yes.' 'Have you had a new stick for it?' 'Yes.' 'And a new frame?' 'Yes.' 'And a new ferule?' 'Yes.' 'And a new handle?' 'Yes.' So he writes his alphabetical appendix to my simple statement of the truth and draws up a learned scheme of 'Umbrella A', 'Umbrella B', 'Umbrella C', 'Umbrella AB', and so forth, the while I continue to proclaim, with the pertinacity of Wordsworth's simple child, and the inconsequence of his boy from Kilve, that 'This is the umbrella which So-and-so gave to me in the year such-and-such.' I accept all his facts as true, but they do not in the least affect the higher truth of my statement, not do they shake my faith in the essential identity of the umbrella, enriched by its traditions and associations, with that of the donor whom I name. Similarly, I may admit without demur the evidences of the higher criticism, and yet not relax my belief in the sovereign truth of the words: 'This is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel.' It is a very shallow cleverness which confounds the exercise of the imagination with the condonation of a lie.

Enough has perhaps been said to show how

far from conclusive, in the opinion of the conservative Jew, is the appeal from faith to reason, or from the spirit to the word. One point only should be added, which the higher critics tend to overlook, or rather, which is immaterial to their argument, and which those who follow them do not realize. An inspired text is not necessarily a text which is inspired in every word. Traditional Judaism, I venture to think, is much more moderate than its opponents. It recognizes at least three elements in the inspired text, as we receive it. First, the message; next, the interpreter; lastly, the audience. Human agents were chosen to communicate the divine will, and something doubtless was lost in this first process of transmission. Further, the transmitting agent had to make his communication to a heterogeneous audience, and that second process of removal from the original Voice involved a a fresh adaptation of the message. The Pentateuchal formula is commonly: 'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them.' Now, taking the thing quite literally, it is

obvious that in any attempt to repeat to a large mixed class the words of a supreme authority, a certain admixture must take place. There is not only the mind of the transmitter, but the mind of the receivers to be considered. Each will colour the message on its way; and there will be in the resultant text the element of Moses and the element of the children of Israel, as well as the original code. The recognition of this fact, which, indeed, is nowhere disguised, by no means detracts from the inspiration of the Pentateuch; but it does, I venture to think, tone down the asperity of the dogma, as Mr Montefiore states it on p. 95: 'The truth is that liberal Judaism has ceased to be a legal religion. In a legal religion the central feature is a belief in a perfect and God-given code, all the enactments of which must be scrupulously obeyed and fulfilled. Orthodox Judaism still declares that this belief, with all its implications, constitutes an essential dogma of the faith.'

Personally, though I do not pretend to obey every injunction in the code, it seems to me far more reasonable to take them as they stand, and to fulfil them, than to cry out that

Judaism has ceased to be a legal religion because the 'higher' critics have discovered by a roundabout way what the author of the Pentateuch states in every chapter of his work, that the Law was removed from the Legislator by a double process of transmission. It is not the business of the 'higher' critics to point out the limitation of their arguments, but it is the business of Judaism to make sure how far the proof of contamination affects the claim to inspiration. On all grounds alike, I venture to think, the claim to inspiration can defend itself, without taking recourse to the *noli me tangere* of mere obstinate orthodoxy. By the substitution of imagination for reason, as the properer canon of judgment, by the recognition that the contents of expression are not exhausted by the intelligence of any one generation, by the perception of a substantial truth behind the shadowy appearances of facts, and by the humble realization of the Deity of *Exodus*, xxxiii, 20 : 'Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me, and live'—in this spirit Biblical criticism may be greeted as a welcome guest in the mansion of faith. It will increase understanding

where it dwells, and not disturb the peace of the household ; it cannot abuse the hospitality which it receives, for the utmost resources of its art do not touch the fringes of belief. It is not knowledge which is to be feared, but the inferences that ignorance may draw from it.

There is little to be added to this survey. But this at least should be apparent, however imperfectly shown, that the conservative Jew will be far better equipped to meet attacks on his belief and temptations to apostasy than his liberal brother. The liberal Jew of Mr Montefiore's book is everlastingly apologizing for himself. On p. 126, ' he will not refuse to obey a law, or regard its public observance as undesirable, merely because it is a ceremonial law, or merely because he can no longer believe that it was divinely revealed to Moses by God. Its observance may still be desirable from different motives.' On p. 155 he registers the general reflection that ' it is impossible to create festivals to order. One must use those which exist, and charge them, where necessary, with newer meanings ' ; and 'providentially ', he concludes, on p. 166, ' the

Sabbath and the Festivals, the Day of Memorial and the Day of Atonement—these can all remain. We can still use them fitly for religious and spiritual ends.' To a reverent mind this kind of reconstruction is most objectionable. It suggests that Judaism is a bankrupt concern, with certain fixtures and furniture, which go with the lease of the premises, and that these must be taken over by the new tenant, pending, as Mr Montefiore writes, on p. 133, ' a modification of the Synagogue structure.' The conservative Jew, on the contrary, is happily reduced to no such humiliating makeshifts. He does not even subscribe to the *ipse dixit* of the liberal Jew : ' We go to Synagogue not to hear a recital of laws or stories, but primarily to *pray* ' (p. 133). The primary object of public worship, he would venture to maintain, is to rivet the links which bind the congregation together, and which bind together the congregations of Israel. No link can ever be forged out of the personal prayers of individual members which shall resist, as Israel has resisted, the persecution of the centuries. Synagogue is a place for prayer, as is every other

place—the open field or the bed-chamber—where man attunes his mind to communion with God. But Synagogue is first and foremost the place of public worship, a central meeting-place and resting-place for the scattered congregations of the Jews. There they assemble to use, to display, and to assert their last common possession of religion, with the aid of a book of common prayer. Certain expressions in that book may or may not appeal to this or that member of the congregation. His feeling, however, may be disregarded, for the fault most probably lies in his own imperfect realization of the purpose which the Synagogue fulfils. Most probably he misses the sanction in history or tradition which attaches to the usage ; and the remedy should first be sought in a careful study of the Prayer-book. Even so, it is inevitable that the forms of public worship will not exactly correspond to the needs of the individual soul. Public worship is bound in a certain degree to be crystallized by sentiment and made rigid by convention. Its 'atmosphere', to use a stock phrase, is necessarily different from that of personal prayer, and any experiment which

aims at a coalescence of the two must end in destroying the purpose for which the Synagogue exists.

The thrill and the glamour remain. The force which, as Mr Montefiore writes, draws a number of non-observant Jews to Synagogue once a year, on the Day of Atonement, is not, I venture to believe, to be explained and contemned, as he contemns it. Their attendance does not prove that 'they are silly enough to think that by this annual rite they may ward off some of the consequences of misspent lives and evil deeds' (p. 162). This is a harsh saying, which entirely misdescribes the lives and deeds of many who are faithful to the annual rite, and to no other ritual ceremonial. The true explanation, it seems to me, is in the magnetic attraction of traditional religion. On some it acts more powerfully than on others, but the framers of the ancient ordinances of the Jews wrought more surely than they knew. The bonds by which they riveted a rebellious people to the Law prove their strength by this phenomenon. Once a year at least even indifferent witnesses come to the congregation of Israel, and claim their

place with the rest. Once a year at least they testify to the living Law, and are drawn within its fold by the force that is in it. Would a Day of Atonement, stripped of its tradition and ceremonial, denuded of its historical associations, make anything like the same appeal? Mr Montefiore writes: 'The modern Day of Atonement is purely spiritual. It is true that most Jews still fast for twenty-four hours, but no one ascribes any efficacy to the fast. It is an old custom, which does no particular harm, and is an exercise in self-control. It has some disciplinal and ascetic value. . . . The fast is, however, a minor and subsidiary feature. In every other respect the day has only to do with fundamental religious ideas, with the conceptions of sin, repentance, reconciliation, and atonement. Such a day is absolutely fitted and useful for every human soul' (p. 163). But Judaism, before it concerns itself with the requirements of the human soul, is concerned with the public expression of religious belief. The fast is very much more than 'an old custom which does no harm'. The fast is the outward sign, the symbol of a common

worship; its roots are set in human nature itself. It acts as the trumpet-call of the Synagogue, to draw the congregation together. Fasting is not atonement, for the less does not contain the greater; but a public system of religion, as distinguished from private confessionals, would hardly survive its foundation if it neglected men's bodies in providing for their souls. It was the weakness of mediæval Judaism, when transported to modern surroundings, to care for the body overmuch, to forget the Law in its symbols. Against this, the Protestant movement of English Jews in 1842 was a healthy reaction; but a new movement of Dissent, which would abolish the symbols altogether, or relegate them at least to a more subsidiary place, and pack away the ark in the lumber-room, is a very different thing. To put it at its highest, it trusts too much to unassisted spiritual desires.

The question of discipline in religion and the problem of race might both be discussed in this context, and from either point of view a strong case could be made out for conservative Judaism. But my object in these chap-

ters is at once more modest and more difficult. I have been trying to show how the forms of public worship, as practised to-day, may still retain their hold on religious-minded men who do not ignore the results of Biblical criticism, and how, from the contrary point of view, the effects of Biblical criticism and of scientific discovery rather strengthen religion than relax it. They show more clearly and definitely the part played by the imagination, and the manner in which its language fulfils the shortcomings of other modes of expression. One can speak only for oneself in a context of this kind, and personally, at least, I feel no sense of insincerity, no impulse to set myself right with the critics outside, when I repeat the consecrated formula with all that it implies: 'This is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel.' When I echo Solomon's prayer—surely the most perfect expression of the longing of the human soul—'What prayer or supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house; then hear thou in

heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest'—I deliberately prefer, on spiritual grounds, to preserve the 'environment' of Solomon, who 'built an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel', and 'set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt' (1 *Kings*, viii, 20—21). All this to the Conservative is not merely true, but vital. It helps to make a difference between his public and his private worship. It has the essence of commonalty; it is a part of the constitution of Israel, transcending the life of individuals, and passing into the possession of the race which cannot fail. Granting a share of comparative sanity to these views, the practices of religion gain enormously by holding them. Warmth, romance, and imagination; immediateness and directness; tradition, sentiment, and association; these qualities which appeal to children, and to the eternal child in man, are added at once to the colder lights of a 'purely spiritual' faith. The object-lessons of belief are added to the

abstract teachings of morality. And for the searchings of the speculative reason, with which human curiosity concerns itself, surely the whole philosophy of conduct is contained in a verse of *Deuteronomy* :

'The secret things are for the Lord our God ; but the revealed things are for us, and for our children, for ever, that we may perform all the words of this Law.'

CHAPTER II

Practical Judaism

I. Law and Life

In the last chapter I attempted to state as clearly as I could the point of view of a moderate Conservative towards the question of observance. Here I must go a step backwards. A personal rescript for religion is inadequate to the needs of the age. It does not touch the root of the problem, which is to make the solution of universal efficacy and application.

One postulate must be assumed, and it is so self-evident that it can hardly be disputed. The average man—as such, the sum and epitome of endless statistical calculations and sociological hypotheses—requires 'God' at some point. Let me write the first personal pronoun for the average man, and once at least in my lifetime I must determine for

myself and by myself the meaning which I attach to that word.

God begins where science terminates. The God-conception supplies the links which human science has not forged. God belongs to the region of faith and belief; science to that of research and demonstration. There are thousands of good men to whom the terminus of science is a *terminus ad quem*. If they could attain the sum of human knowledge, they would have found their Holy Grail. They neither seek nor admit aught beyond. For them, unlike the sphinx, humanity answers its own riddles. I disagree with these matter-of-fact people; or, rather, to put it more modestly (though modesty on a question of this kind is too commonly a cloak for indolence), I find the result unsatisfying. I cannot exclude 'God' from my philosophy. The facts of human knowledge, in my opinion, are far too imperfectly correlated, far too crude and indefinite, to be explainable by themselves. I can no more build a philosophy out of experience than my ancestors could make bricks without straw. Personally, I cannot see how any system of thought can

satisfy all the requirements of human intellect, without providing for the imaginative reason. The boldest figure of speech in the Old Testament, as bold and as figurative in its kind as Watts's picture of Hope, is contained in the last verse of *Exodus*, xxxiii, 'And I will take away mine hands, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen.' Now, this Unseen, or Unknown, requires a name in our vernacular. We meet it too often on the frontier of every science to pass it by without a name. So I want 'God' in my philosophy. I want a conception to represent the Infinite Unknowable when I reach it. My idea of the Unknowable is God, and in this sense, at least—a very primitive sense—I may call myself a religious man.

Or is this claim too big to be supported? I am not a pedant about language, but I should like my words to be exactly equivalent to my thoughts. My need of the God-idea does not make me a religious man: it makes me a religious-minded man, and I have still to choose beween the various creeds and the various types of their adherents in order to satisfy my need.

I am conscious that, as a religious-minded man, my need of the God-idea is far more intellectual than moral. Let me dwell upon this for a moment, for it corresponds, I believe, to the implicit, but unexpressed, experience of very many others. There are systems of religion which bolster up moral deficiencies, or defective systems of morality. The 'hell' of the Calvinists and Puritans, the dour and sour tenets of the Presbyters, the fire and rack of the Inquisition, are all on the moral plane, and were designed, more or less effectively, to make men good by fear of God. The 'fear of God' in Judaism, to which I shall recur, is a far more philosophic conception, and moves far higher springs of conduct. But on this question of intellect and morals, while I 'want religion' or 'seek salvation' quite as keenly, though, I hope, not as noisily, as any corybantic Salvationist, the object of my need and search is mainly intellectual. I do not—it is a personal experience—I do not expect to become more *good* by practising religion. Its practices may have that indirect effect, but their primary purpose is to make men more *wise*. Know-

ledge stops short of satisfying men's intellectual requirements :

> Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower—but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.

Thus Tennyson popularized this reflection, and, writing of ' Knowledge ', he says :

> Let her know her place ;
> She is the second, not the first.
>
> A higher hand must make her mild,
> If all be not in vain ; and guide
> Her footsteps, moving side by side
> With wisdom, like the younger child :
>
> For she is earthly of the mind,
> But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
>
> *In Memoriam*, cxii.

These passages are full of meaning. Apart from the beauty of their diction, they convey valuable truths which help us in our daily necessities. For this intellectual want is not restricted to Sabbaths and Holy Days. Any day, and at any moment of any day, we may be confronted with a situation in which human authority fails. The light we see by and the air we breathe—every physical function—every act, conscious or uncon-

scious, in obedience to a physical law—all these ultimately demand a superhuman explanation. Earth is our nurse, not our mother ; the secret of our being is not here.

Such things affect people in various moods and in varying degrees ; the poet most deeply, the materialist least ; and religious systems which supply the want have not escaped the fate of other human expedients. The man who practises religion is apt gradually to find that its efficacy depends on quantity rather than on quality. A religious system, in other words, is likely to degenerate into superstition. When we say, 'Thank God for my good dinner', 'God bless you', 'Please God', and the like, we are probably merely superstitious, and not really religious. In practice, we are breaking the second commandment, and taking His name in vain, as much as if we used one of the oaths of the market. For we mean something much less than our conception of God should imply. We do not actually postulate a relation between the fact of having taken food, or of parting from a friend, or of invoking success, and the Infinite Unknowable of philosophy.

The use of these phrases is analogous to the excesses of the dram-drinker, or to the advertiser's trick of speaking of pills as infallible. It is simply a case of exaggerative language, and, though certainly best avoided, is a question of good taste, not of ethics.

At the same time, it is a question which has a definite bearing on the problem of conformity. A rigid conformist is likely to be so much inured to the use of the symbols of the system that he mistakes them for the religion itself. He introduces the God-idea, symbolically, into almost every act of his life. The great acts of birth, marriage, and death are obviously consecrated by such symbols; their ritual and ceremonies need not here be rehearsed. But the God-idea enters into his food, separating the clean from the unclean and the liquid from the solid under hygienic recommendations raised to Divine commands; it enters into his clothing, into the shape of his beard, into the ornaments of his household, until it is liable to become an end in itself instead of a means to holiness, and until the mere observance of the hedges round the Law becomes the

spirit of the law, and the life conducted in that spirit.

To the nonconformist Jew, on the contrary—and the contrast may be extended to other creeds—all this symbolism is optional. He relegates it to its proper place—the place of its origin—as reminders and remembrancers of the spirit which resides behind the symbols ; and, keeping that spirit stedfastly and conscientiously before him, the observance of the signs is irksome and distracting. But perhaps, in his access of rationalism, he tends to forget that the average man must not look for exceptional treatment. Special exemptions and special acts of grace were reserved in the Middle Ages for those who could afford to pay for them. We pay now in different coin, but the principle is the same ; the average man must be content with the accepted standard of public worship. Further, a distinction is to be drawn between public worship and private faith. Between the guise of thought and action under which I introduce the God-idea, and the standard of public worship to which I willingly conform, there is the difference between the individual and

the community. The community is something more than an aggregate of individuals; it is their harmonious aggregate; and, to produce that harmony, each unit must give and take. Therefore, there are two skeins to unravel. First, the operation of the God-idea, and, secondly, its public expression.

'Nur das Gesetz kann uns die Freiheit geben',—Goethe's pregnant aphorism is allied to a hundred phrases in sacred and profane literature. Let me adduce two examples only: 'I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts' (*Psalms*, cxix, 45); 'pure law commeasures perfect freedom' (Tennyson, *Œnone*).

A sense of this absolute dependence of liberty on law is at the root of the God-idea.

The proposition is hard to prove without a much wider survey of philosophy and history than I am competent to direct. I should like the proposition to be taken as proven, and I could quote in its favour the eminent authority, not only of the Psalmist, Goethe, and Tennyson, but of Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, Kant, Hugo, Wordsworth, Huxley, and many other great thinkers. It

rests, after all, on a very simple fact of observation, that Nature itself moves freely within a circle of law, that all free growth and development obeys inevitable laws, and that liberty is a mean between the two extremes of slavery and anarchy. It is an arch of the principle, beyond which thought cannot reach, and on the assumption of which, as Professor J. A. Stewart writes in his fine introduction to *The Myths of Plato*, 'our whole rational life of conduct and science rests'—the assumption that life is worth living. 'No arguments', he continues, 'which Reason can bring for, or against, this ultimate truth are relevant; for Reason cannot stir without assuming the very thing which these arguments seek to prove or to disprove.' At this transcendental level I must leave the proposition. Roughly, the God-idea cannot be translated into thought and action in human life without defining its scope and limits. If it is to have 'Freiheit', it must have 'Gesetz'. As a mere abstract idea, it has no speech, shape, or efficacy.

It is of the essence of the God-idea that its 'facts' are not demonstrable. Divine

government has no policemen in uniform, no Revenue Commissioners' receipts. The stroke of genius which created the Salvation Army was the inspiration to supply these features, concreting the law of the God-idea in outward, visible form. But it is a mark of weak imagination and of poverty of intellect to make much use of such devices. Hence, the army's appeal is mainly to uneducated people, or to people whose emotions are developed at the expense of their imagination. To most of us the 'facts' of the God-idea appeal more strongly because they cannot be proved. We cannot touch an officer of God and say, 'Here is a limb of the Law!' We cannot show an officer's receipt and say, 'This was our contribution to the Divine economy!' Our imagination must be brought into play if we are to recognize such 'facts' among the common facts of mere experience. It is only on the plane of imagination that the God-idea begins to exist, and not the least of the high claims of the Jewish religion to acceptance is its prohibition of any representation of the Divine image. So keen was the Hebrew's appreciation of the

advantage of keeping the God-idea to the plane of imagination, without giving it concrete shape, that it might not even be likened to anything concrete, and not even children were to be permitted to assist their weaker imaginings by any tangible likeness of the Idea. The child's mind is naturally concretive—the modern tendency of infant-education is all in the direction of the concrete—and the Levitical Hebrew was himself in the childhood of his race. The more wonderful, therefore, was his perception of the enhanced value of the God-idea, while it was kept on the plane of imagination. The second commandment is not merely a remarkable effort of intellect in the racial history of the Jews; it is a logical deduction from deep philosophical reasoning. The prohibition of graven images is the intellectual charter of the Hebrews. By its observance, they acquired the freedom of all abstract learning—art, music, philosophy: without it, the Western peoples might still have been lingering, like the East, in the childhood of faith and letters. 'Think divinely' was the effect of that command, and it was immeasurably harder than

the 'think imperially' of a latter-day revelation.

How to observe this law, how to win the liberties of abstract thought by keeping the God-idea free from human contamination, is a problem which is constantly before us. To-day, thanks to our ancestors, we have outgrown the literal temptation to fall down to stocks and stones. But the spirit of the precept is the same, and the need of its observance is even greater.

This perception—the unimaginableness of the God-idea under the likeness of any created thing—is on a level, intellectually speaking, with the monotheistic dogma of the same age and source. Out of the Infinite Unknowable, the Hebrew wrested two truths: First, that there is an Idea or a Cause beyond the veil of visual observation; and, secondly, that, throughout its manifestations, this Cause or Idea is one. So great a power of abstract thought, so severe a strain on the intellectual imagination, is of the essence of Judaism as a creed. These postulates granted, these truths and requirements once grasped and fulfilled, the creed descends from the cold and bare

heights of speculation to the most homely and comfortable offices. The Unspeakable Unity, the Ineffable Name, is brought down to the hearts and hearths of mankind in every attractive guise of figurative language. He is the God of the law of the redemption of the first-born (*Numbers*, iii, 40); the God of the law of fringes (*ib*, xvi, 38); the God, in a word, of all the statutes of the Pentateuch: 'And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, *for our good always*' (*Deut.*, vi, 24). On the lips of the poets of the psalter, he is 'my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation and my high tower' (*Psalms*, xviii, 2); 'the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork' (xix, i); 'he hath founded the earth upon the seas, and established it upon the floods' (xxiv, 2); 'in his favour is life' (xxx, 5); 'he beholdeth all the sons of men, he considereth all their works' (xxxiii, 13, 15); 'he knoweth the secrets of the heart' (xliv, 21); he is 'the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea' (lxv, 5);

'he shall come down like rain upon the mown grass' (cxxii, 6); 'he leadeth me beside the still waters' (xxiii, 2); therefore, 'I wait for the Lord, and in his word do I hope; my soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning' (cxxx, 5, 6); 'my soul is even as a weaned child' (cxxxi, 2); 'I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods' (cxxxv, 5); and I cry, 'give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for His mercy endureth for ever' (cxxxvi, 1); 'let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord!' (cl, 6). I need not follow His praises on the lips of the prophets and seers, whose music is the wisdom of humanity. The point which I want to establish—which I think is established by these quotations—is that the God-idea was applied by Hebrew poets and sages to the thoughts and actions of their own day. The Infinite Unknowable was an intellectual conception. The Unspeakable Unity became a household word, the Ineffable Name a familiar prayer.

To live by the law of the fear of God—this is the religion of the Jews. At its base are the

statutes of the legislators, at its spire the praises of the poets ; wreathed in the figures of their melodious speech—the clouds of the incense of worship—the column rises to the sky. And the claim of the law is supreme : ' And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind ; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts ' (1 *Chronicles*, xxviii, 9). ' I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings ' (*Jeremiah*, xvii, 10).

Accordingly, whether conformist or nonconformist, I have decided to introduce the God-idea into my life under the guise of the monotheistic and non-anthropomorphic system of the Jewish religion.

Consciously, deliberately, anxiously almost, I commit my thought and action to the dominion of a certain amount of law. I am restricted, legalized, as the phrase runs, but I accept that dominion in order to move more freely. For one thing, I am a Jew by birth. Hebraism is in my blood, and commits me

straightway to a definite inheritance of potential action and thought.

Think of a new-born infant for a moment. Blake's lines recur to memory:

> 'I have no name;
> I am but two days old.'
> What shall I call thee?
> 'I happy am,
> Joy is my name.'
> Sweet joy befall thee!

But this song of innocence left out of consideration the vaccination officer, the registrar of births, and other officers of law. Being born, we see, is not so naked a proposition after all. The long arm of the law embraces our babies from the start. 'I happy am, Joy is my name', is not a sufficient reply to the insistent questions of heredity and environment. A Hebrew, at any rate, is committed to a tendency of thought, a mental and intellectual bias, which may languish by atrophy, but which he cannot altogether escape. Association counts for a good deal in this brief life of fleeting possessions, and his search for an expression of creed is limited to this extent, that he leans with every instinct of his moral nature to the formulæ consecrated by tra-

dition. Not the least valuable asset in the storehouse of the Jewish religion is the hard-dying use of those racy racial idioms which none but a Jew can understand. The free-masonry which recognizes such phrases goes deeper than mere lip-language. It touches the fringe at least of Hebrew consanguinity. For what are the virtues of Hebraism? Its vices every one can enumerate—the love of parade and show, the loud voices and crude colours, the eagerness to be in view, the push, the greed, the materialism. Yet these defects have their qualities, and the inclination towards the sunny side is not vicious in itself, and leads, if properly directed, to an ambitious use of opportunities, a readiness to open both hands, and a cheerful outlook on life, which contain the secret of success. It is not a bad thing to be born with the impulse to success which beats in Hebrew blood. There is sobriety in it, too, and moral patience, and long-suffering, and a positive distaste for such excesses as have ruined other races.

The mystic bond of union between spirit and flesh—indissoluble while it lasts, but

never to be reforged by human agency—associates all these tendencies of the blood with certain spiritual usages. The Levitical legislators did not write without a knowledge of the human constitution. The innumerable links which they forged between the body and the soul expressed their acute apprehension of the facts of modern physiology, which recognizes more and more clearly the close and intimate connexion between the physical and mental spheres. In this sense, it is appropriate to examine the scientific value of the Nineteenth Chapter of *Leviticus*, with special reference, let us say, to verses 18 and 19: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself . . . Thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed, neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.' What is the ultimate meaning of this juxtaposition of an ethical precept of the utmost spiritual significance with material precepts of no apparent significance at all. Simply this, that man is flesh and spirit, body and soul together, and the legislator was too wise, too scientific in his generation, to expect to cultivate the latter without regard to the

former. Neighbourly love and its kindred virtues will not spring in barren soil, but trench and dig and toil at the surface of the earth, and its deeper treasures will be reached. The legislator showed forth in his code the same scientific truth which Tennyson, centuries later, made popular in his verse:

> That life is not as idle ore,
> But iron dug from central gloom,
> And heated hot with burning fears.
> And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
> And batter'd with the shocks of doom
>
> To shape and use. Arise and fly
> The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
> Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die.
>
> *In Memoriam*, cxvi.

The whole purpose of so-called legal Judaism —and, generally, of the expression of faith— is to assist its adherents to 'move upward, working out the beast', on scientific lines of progress. Its laws are as inevitable in their logic as the laws of evolution itself. As the flesh is, so the spirit is, was the true Mosaic revelation, and science confirms it every day.

It is possible that the conforming Jew of

the 'orthodox' type would not defend his observance on these grounds. This excursion into the metaphysics of the subject would be —not, perhaps, out of his depth, but—beyond the range of his curiosity. I doubt if the 'why' of the matter ever bothers him at all. 'Here', he would say, 'are certain precepts grouped in a single list by the inspired compiler of the Nineteenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. He gives me no indication which would warrant my making a distinction between the precept in verse 3, for example, Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father, and the precept in verse 27, Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard, or between the precept in verse 28, Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, and that in verse 36, Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have. Failing such indication', he would declare, 'I do not presume to distinguish between them. To me they are all inspired, and all equally to be observed.' Nay, more, discouraging curiosity in such matters, he does not often inquire too closely into the source

of his precepts. He, or his prototype, the Jew of the Pale, does not always take the trouble, or has not always the ability, to distinguish between the text and the commentary, between the author and the annotator, and orthodoxy, therefore, frequently demands observance of a custom invented by the conscientious scruples of an unilluminated mediæval scribe.

I think that such conformity errs, and, in the higher interests of religious truth—higher, I mean, than individual devoutness, with its narrowing tendency—I cannot but deplore the incurious and unprogressive attitude to which it bears witness. Religious truth, I am convinced, is so much more deeply founded than the phantasmagoric truths of human knowledge and discovery that it can afford to welcome the utmost efforts of curiosity. The more completely the clouds of human error roll away, the more magnificent is the outline of 'the impregnable rock'. Moreover, a sense of colour or of proportion intervenes. I cannot raise the precept as to the corners of my beard to the level of that as to loving my neighbour. I appreciate the

harmony of the design which fuses them both in one pattern; I apprehend the informing idea, the light and the shade together. But appreciation and apprehension do not carry conviction. Half the beauty and all the use would be destroyed if I were not free to observe the Law in the sense in which it was given: 'After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances . . . Ye shall, therefore, keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them' (*Leviticus*, xviii, 3–5). For the vital question to be asked—if the right of asking questions be conceded at all—is: How far has legal Judaism fulfilled the purpose of its origin? Are the memory of Egypt and the example of Canaan so vivid and evil to-day that these elaborate precautions must still be fully observed? Are the Egyptian tiger and the Canaanitish ape—to employ Tennyson's phraseology—so unconquered still in our breasts, so strong in us to-day as to arrest the evolution of religion, and to require of us still

an implicit obedience to a law promulgated in an earlier epoch of the 'upward' tendency of the race? Work out the beast by all means, and let the ape and tiger die, but do not waste moral courage and spiritual capacities in killing the slain. Are the heathen ordinances of Canaan still an invitation to join 'the reeling Faun'? Do the flesh-pots of Egypt still lure to 'the sensual feast'? Or does not the law of the fear of God provide for a higher exercise of the qualities trained by His statutes, and may not their literal observance deprive them of their remoter efficacy? For this at least is clear in all discussion of the Law, that everything which is derived from it is contained in it. Every resultant virtue is produced by an implicit precept, since the spirit is greater than the letter. The command to abstain from certain flesh contains not merely a prohibition; it is at the same time the direct cause of the virtues of temperance and wholesomeness which ensue. 'This is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel' (*Deuteronomy*, iv, 44), may be declared as specifically to-day as on the day of its first promulgation. The law is not

less but greater for the accretions of time which have extended its meaning and enlarged its scope. The higher the services to mankind to which the law can be put, the greater is the glory of its founder. Thus, no impiety is committed, no healthful sentiment is wronged, if the law be raised in places to a higher power in its own kind, and observed in its extension, not literally. Its precepts, as we receive them, are in varying degrees of relevancy to the fear of God at which they aim; and, without selecting one precept or neglecting another at random, we may recognize differences in space, lights and shadows in the perspective, a nearness and a remoteness in respect to their distance from the goal. The precept as to neighbourly love we may still try to obey literally, and our observance will still fall short of the height of the command. The precept as to the corners of my beard might now be obeyed in an extended sense, interpreting its special significance into a permanent warning against such fashions of dress as were exemplified at that time by that expression. And the secondary meaning which is implicit in the command is as plainly

a part of it as the literal prohibition; the secondary resultant virtue is as much its reward, and the merit of observance is equal.

CHAPTER III

Practical Judaism

II. Life and Law

Precepts of observance are recommended to practice by certain definite undertakings contracted by the Biblical writers, and expressed, as always, in the language best suited to a subject transcending experience.

In the last words of David, the son of Jesse, we read: 'One that ruleth over men righteously, that ruleth in *the fear of God*, he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds; when the tender grass springeth out of the earth, through clear shining after rain' (2 *Samuel*, xxiii, 3, 4). In a psalm of David we find a not dissimilar passage: 'The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, There is no *fear of God* before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, that his iniquity shall not be found out. . . .

Thy lovingkindness, O Lord, is in the heavens; thy faithfulness reacheth unto the skies. . . . The children of men take refuge under the shadow of thy wings. . . . For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light' (*Psalms*, xxvi, 1, 5, 7, 9). Job repeats it in his parable: 'But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding The deep saith, It is not in me, and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten with gold, . . . yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies. . . . God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven. . . . When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder, then did he see it and declare it; he established it, yea, he searched it out. And unto man he said, Behold, *the fear of the Lord*, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding' (*Job*, xxviii, 12, 14, 15, 18, 23, 24, 26–28). The Psalmist calls to the children: 'Come, children, hearken unto me, I will teach you *the fear of the Lord*. . . . Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it' (*Psalms*,

xxxiv, 11, 14). And then comes the wonderful series of proverbial sayings : ' *The fear of the Lord* is the beginning of knowledge ' (*Proverbs*, i, 7) ; ' *the fear of the Lord* is to hate evil ' (*ibid*, viii, 13) ; ' *the fear of the Lord* prolongeth days ' (*ibid*, x, 27) ; ' *the fear of the Lord* is a fountain of life ' (*ibid*, xiv, 27) ; ' by *the fear of the Lord* men depart from evil '(*ibid*, xvi, 6). The prophet dwells on the same note : ' The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of *the fear of the Lord* ; and his delight shall be in *the fear of the Lord* : and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears ; . . . They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ' (*Isaiah*, xi).

These passages are not ' mere ' poetry, whatever that commodity may be, though they are poetically composed ; still less can they be described as rhetoric, rhodomontade, or verbiage. The ' clear shining after rain ', the light in which ' we shall see light ', the

jewel that is not in the sea, nor to be gotten with gold', 'the fountain of life', 'the prolongation of days'—these are phrases, if you will, flowers of diction and figures of speech, but they express a truth for which, as Matthew Arnold reminds us in an often-quoted passage, the language of feeling is better suited, and comes nearer to the sense required, than the language of fact and scientific demonstration.

For what, after all, is the effect of these passages? What promises do they contain? What propositions do they state? Take the first and the second quotations. Do we not all know men who correspond to the descriptions of David?—men and women of gracious and happy lives, who radiate the faith that is in them; who give of their best, not grudgingly, but gladly, who are of cheerful countenance and comfortable voice, not flatterng themselves in their own eyes that their iniquity will not be found out, but clear, and straight, and shining, 'like a morning without clouds.' Surely this contrast exists, and surely it is no mere figure of speech but a reasonable induction from facts of the intellectual imagi-

nation to refer it to the presence or absence of a quality which may fairly be defined as the fear of God? And, again, in the parable of Job, it is not mere rhetoric to urge that neither the earth nor the sea can wholly explain itself. Does not geology stop short of the explanation, though its researches carry us back to the farthest limits of time? Does not every science terminate at the borders of a wilderness, and declare, almost in so many words, Here knowledge ends and wisdom begins? What is there false to truth in these phrases of the Hebrew poets, and why are they less true, less convincing, because they are poetically expressed? The common language of the sciences, the vernacular of fact, is not current at the boundary of their territories. As the prospect changes, so the language changes: the traveller who reaches those regions, who has taken all knowledge for his province and still lacks understanding, acquires a new tongue for his new needs. His human senses do not satisfy him. When in His light we shall see light, and not judge after the sight of our eyes, the language invented by man to express the facts of his

observation will not suit our requirements. We want approximate phrases, figures to suggest the unexpressed, a troop of tropes and images to bear us in triumph across the border. The simplest words will be the truest : there is no longer need for science to weigh its language, and to heap polysyllable on polysyllable in desperate ventures at exactitude. Broad, cool, and serene is the air across the boundary ; serene and cool, and broad as the brow of wisdom herself. 'The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.' 'Depart from evil, and do good ; seek peace and pursue it.'

Whether rightly or wrongly, I want 'that other strength' acutely. For who is so gross as to pretend that the gratification of the senses and sensational truth are enough in this short day of yearnings he knows not whence and pullings he knows not whither ? I want this stability in my life. I want this difficult truth, won by the hard, strait way. I want to know and to understand. I want to be wise, as well as to be learned.

This is a question of feeling, and I need not apologize for discussing it in terms of the

emotions. But the need is not to be ruled out by the seemingly ingenuous argument that another does not feel likewise. The non-existence of the feeling is a curable disease, and requires attention. Not to know is pitiable, but the mood may be capable of explanation : not to desire to know is neither explainable nor excusable. Indifference is the only folly. For I am convinced—it is a conviction of immemorial antiquity—that the religious sense is cultivable, and should be cultivated. Its neglect or atrophy is an intellectual loss, comparable to, but surpassing, in the measure of the loss, a deafness to music, or a blindness to colour, or an imperception of scent : 'Get wisdom', cries the author of the *Proverbs*. 'Wisdom is the principal thing ; therefore get wisdom.' 'Give me now wisdom', prayed Solomon to God, and because he asked for wisdom in preference to riches, honour, or long life, therefore his prayer was granted and the rest were added thereto—(2, *Chron.*, i, 10, 11). With all the resources of imagery, all the beauties that emotional language can command, this is the constant theme of the priests of the fear of

God. The training is difficult, the quest is arduous, but the root-principle is within the comprehension of a child: 'He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul.'

Do not let me be misunderstood in speaking above of 'terms of the emotions'. The cultivation of the religious sense is a matter for the intellectual imagination, and no higher capacities within the range of the human system could be employed. But on this plane of capacity the language of commonsense is inadequate. The commonsense of observation does not provide the facts which have to be expressed in that region. Hence a new language is invoked, the subsidiary language of figure, imagery, and emotion. But this is by no means equivalent to saying, with certain shallow critics, even among the best-disposed moralists, that religion should be left to the care of women and children and that men are strong enough to do without it. Religion has suffered too much from the disease of hysteria, to which it is unfortunately prone. The decoration of churches, the croquet-playing proclivities of curates, the working of altar-cloths, and smoking-

caps—these are all phases of the religious life, more popular in the early Victorian epoch than to-day, which lent force to the contention that a man was not required to cultivate the religious sense. To this pseudo-emotional bias there was added the far more insidious pseudo-scientific bias, which marked the first hasty conclusions from Darwinian hypotheses. 'Evolution'—blessed word!—was a kind of backbone of scepticism, and every religious-minded person was either feminine, or invertebrate. These forces, happily, are waning. Not the least healthy sign of the revival of religion is the reaction against religious fictions. The doctrines of salvation by faith, of eternal damnation, and so forth, though foreign to Jewish theology, diffused a general atmosphere of anti-religious sentiment, of impatience of the priestcraft and its works, which affected Judaism too. Religion, in a sense, is being secularized: its ceremonies and rites may still be the prerogative of a class, but its liberties and its charter are unreserved. The religious life is universally more esteemed than the religious profession; and, with professionalism creep-

ing in and spoiling so many branches of human activity, the gradual release of religion from its grasp is a matter of sincere congratulation. It is re-acquiring an independent backbone, essential to intellectual vitality, and it is losing its character of a superfluous appendage to the emotional system. It speaks by figures and images, for it addresses the intellectual imagination of mankind from the region of the Infinite Unknowable ; but it corresponds to a conscious need formulated by the heart of man and confirmed by his reason.

'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom', and towards the attainment of this end the genius of the Hebrews was devoted. By applying their genius to this purpose it is obvious at once that they conferred on mankind an inestimable service. They interpreted nature in the terms of the religious sense, and conjugated life in the religious mood. All conduct is a mood of life : all conscious mental life is an interpretation of nature. Every mode of interpretation is an avenue leading to truth. To 'see God face to face' is, in every variation of the metaphor,

the sole and common aim of the path-finders and their followers. The philosopher chooses one path, the poet another, the painter a third; the materialist seizes the text, 'The earth hath he given to the children of men', and tries to wring a meaning out of life by a fervid but too brief use of a few of its fleeting possessions. Each in his own way, and according to the degree of his intellectual perception of the problem, tries to reach Truth Absolute through his apprehension of Truth Relative. Each, however he defines his goal, seeks God through His works, seeks the Ineffable Unity through the visible units which he can touch and call by name. The Hebrews, alone, among the peoples, took the μακροτέραν ὁδον, the 'longer way' to knowledge, and sought God by the steep path of goodness They used no ancillary media of interpretation. They left no system of philosophy, no art, no letters, as such. They went straight for Truth Absolute.

But this high aim is not to be attained without a certain amount of formalism and of legalism, if the term must be used. The means and appliances of the religious-minded

man are as necessary to his quest as the tools of his craft to the astronomer. The nonconformist may say : ' This harping on the string of the Law is a mischievous piece of atavism ; this solemn recitation of statements avowedly untrue, as, for instance, the First Chapter of *Genesis*, is fatal to the spirit of enlightened education ; this mummery of the Ark should be relegated to the lumber-room, and the prophetical writings—expurgated —should be set up in its stead.' The nonconformist may say it, and A, B, or I may echo it (I do not, as it happens, but I might), and it still remains a piece of experimental reasoning, an empirical opinion of purely personal value. The views expressed in the previous chapters, obvious and conventional though they may be, are not therefore less necessary to iterate, inasmuch as every one does not admit them, and allow for the value of the admission, in formulating his scheme of religious observance. Every one, that is to say, does not trouble to correlate the requirements of ceremonialism with the requirements of the religious mind. I venture to think that there is an insensibility

in modern nonconformity to the potentialities of the religiousness which it rejects, and that there is at the same time a superstition in the opposite type as to the efficacy of the religiousness which is cultivated. Dogmatists are apt to confuse themselves in the details of practical piety, and anti-dogmatists are apt to drift to cold and colourless shores under the star of human reason. These prolegomena to religious practices are *ex hypothesi* conventional; they simply re-affirm the obvious foundations of religion for a generation half of which is too lazy to conform and the other half of which thinks itself too clever.

I am aware of the obvious difficulties: that indifference is so easy to acquire, and is worn so lightly and so elegantly; and that, at the other extreme, it seems so stupid to conform when clever people have 'disproved the Bible'. Public opinion is a strong force, and, when the tide is setting in the direction of nonconformity, doubtless it is well-nigh irresistible. Still, I believe with fair evidence that there is a large contingent of thoughtful Englishmen who deplore both the 'slack' element and the 'clever' element which are contributing to

the force of that tide, and who would be glad to see the foundations of religion cleared of the accumulated rubble deposited by the so-called Higher Critics, and of the dust shaken from the shoes of those who have turned the other way. And, if, as I have tried to show, the religious sense is a sign, not of weakness, but of strength ; if its expression demands the exercise of the highest faculties within the capacity of mankind ; if the Jewish religion is founded impregnably on truths far surpassing in the range of their importance the discoveries of human science ; if an apprehension of the doctrine of the inimitable Unity opens the doors of wisdom—an apprehension, not a mere lip-assent—as an apprehension of the postulates of the sciences opens the doors of knowledge ; if, by re-tracing the old paths, so well known, so conventional, so familiar, as, perhaps, to be taken for granted, we can realize afresh and for ourselves the vital meaning of the parable, 'the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding' ; if we can wring that verity from the shadows that come and go, filling our lungs with its spirit, pouring its blood through our veins,

we shall have tasted, each of us personally, the elixir of life, which has preserved the Hebrew race ; we shall have a compass at sea, and a map in the mazes of life ; we shall have a purpose before us, a standard of conduct every day, and we shall repeat in our single lives the powers of love and faith, the independence of the spirit through all the hampering trammels of the flesh, which the Jews typify in history.

It might almost be argued that a minimum even of blind observance, conceded from the distracting business of life, is more Jewish in its origin and its effect than any amount of public emotion of a soul's-awakening type. A blind conformity to a minimum is preferable as a Jewish ideal to a reconstruction of the Temple on lines of self-evolved enlightenment. Judaism asks—this is the mistake of the clever people—not intelligence, but, in the first instance, obedience. Wisdom is its reward, not its entrance-qualification. Obey the Law—fully, if you will, with understanding, if you can, partially and blindly, if you cannot, but—obey the Law. A hard saying, but not harder than

many human demands, and infinitely safer of its reward. Its object, I take it, is to create the habit of obedience. Its aim is to urge the expediency, the higher expediency, perhaps, but still not more than the expediency, of a certain quantity of observance, knowing that, psychologically, no habit can rust. The appeal is purposely based on common motives of conduct, knowing that the higher springs are moved by conduct itself, and my own part has simply been to suggest the philosophic bases of such arguments *ad hominem et rem.*

And yet how simple the whole matter is, after all. We may amplify in this place the reasoning from the imagination which was suggested above. The fear of the Lord begins in awe. 'When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy Fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou are mindful of him ?'—(*Ps.*, viii, 3–4). Of course, this is scientifically inaccurate, and literally absurd. The Lord has no fingers ; the heavens are not his work ; he does not ordain the stars ; they have no relativity to man. 'For Thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands ; Thou hast put all things under his feet ; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field ; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea ' (*ibid*, 5–8). Here there is a glimmering of sense, though the statements are still very loose, still most childishly composed. There are no such things as angels ; man's dominion over the brute-creation is due to his own skill, and to such scientific formulæ as the survival of the fittest, natural selection, and the like. The evolutionist re-writes the psalmist, and, though he may discover an adumbration to accuracy in the actual sentiments expressed—though the firmament is vast, and the stars are set in order, though man is a speck on an atom, yet dowered with self-consciousness and reason —still he can see no cause to express such sentiments so sillily, and to ascribe earthly phenomena to Divine agency. There *is* no cause in evolutionist philosophy, but the cause lies deeper in the hearts and minds of men. The evolutionists give God longer names ; they do not give him a truer name ; they do not give him a name which corresponds more

accurately to such conception as can be formed of him; their own scientific language does not come equally near to the imperious need of even approximate expression. For though the Pelion of science be piled on the Ossa of religion, no structure of human hands can pierce behind the stars. The language of religion, we find, with its metaphors and figures, by which it disguises and assists the inevitable imperfection of all language as an instrument for the expression of the unseen, is the best and most suitable at our disposal for the purpose which it serves. As the Philomela of the poets is nearer to our conception of the nightingale, and not less necessary to its complete expression, than the *luscinia curruca dentirostris insessor* of the natural historian, so the language of the psalmist is nearer to our mood of awe beneath the stars than the lore of the evolutionist, and his conclusion commands assent, 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth' (*ibid*, 9). It is as near truth absolute as we can get. It is the last word of man to God ere he see Him 'face to face'.

There are certain times in a man's life,

certain seasons in the year, certain days and anniversaries, when no lower language than this will satisfy his needs. He cannot be thanking God at every hour of the common day. Philosophically, perhaps, he should, if he referred everything to first principles, but, practically, he does not, and the omission is compensated by the fact that the God-idea does not grow too familiar. But if, for example, his emotions are stirred by birth or death he does not find it an adequate expression of his feelings to contemplate the statistical regularity of such occurrences. Statistics, however ingenious, however interesting at other times, do not speak the language which he wants. It may be an excess of sensibility, but his mood is too exalted for that expression, though he finds it adequate enough for the ordinary occurrences of every day. Life and death, in other words, in relation to the microcosm, demand, in all but the most insensible, a religious expression for the moods which they induce. So I want to thank God for the flowering of the earth ; so I seek His assurance that the winter will lift ; so, too, I turn to Him when a change in the calendar

reminds me to number my days ; so I welcome a day once a year to spend in communion with truth, away from the distractions of the world ; so I pay my annual tribute to the liberties of my race, and once a week I devote a short two hours of practice to the language of the higher imagination which is current beyond these voices. Sabbath, Passover, Pentecost, New Year, Tabernacles, Atonement—the solemn cycle is complete : the few days are set apart for the satisfaction of the religious mood, which, if my premisses are correct, is not the arbitrary hypothesis of an autocratic church, but arises out of natural conditions in every full-grown consciousness.

This cycle of observance represents the demand of the Jewish ' law ' on Jewish life. Excluding the fifty-two Sabbaths, it works out at a trifle less than two per cent. of a man's lifetime, by no means an excessive demand on the holiday-making capacities of the race. The Levitical code requires the observance of the Passover (first and last days), Pentecost (one day), Day of Memorial (one day), Day of Atonement (one day), and Tabernacles (first and last days)—seven days

in all. Each, moreover, is associated with a specific mood of feeling, cultivable, and eminently worthy of being rescued from the all-engulfing stream of affairs. I need not rehearse these associations in detail ; dull, indeed, and infirm must the Jewish sensibility be which does not thrill to the memory of the Exodus, to the blowing of the trumpets, to the summons to conduct, and to the rejoicing of the Law ; while those who do not respond to the call of the nature-festivals, with their Paganism consecrated by 'imaginative reason' —to use Matthew Arnold's fine phrase—are victims of hyper-civilization. Literally, the appeal is magnificent ; symbolically, it is well-nigh irresistible, and the prophetical writers are careful to explain that the real value of observance resides in the spirit rather than in the letter.

The Sabbaths supervene, but I do not urge their plea here, because every man more or less regularly is bound to rest one day a week. It is a law of Nature, as much as of religion ; or, rather, like all the laws of the Jewish religion, it rests primarily on natural foundations. Those who agree with me as to the re-

quirements of the religious mood need no goading to the synagogue ; but the preachers, perhaps, should remember that cities are built beside rivers, not rivers beside cities ; that the synagogues, in other words, were built in places and at a time from which the stream of life is tending to recede, and that the week-end in the country is an inevitable result of cheaper and quicker means of travel. The comparative emptiness of west-end places of worship at certain seasons of the year is not necessarily a sign of the weakening of the religious life. It is not possible, I think, and it is certainly not desirable, to lay down absolute rules as to what is lawful and unlawful on the Sabbath. Parents may safely be left to decide such questions for themselves, guided by the obvious general principle that the rest enjoined for the Sabbath is altruistic as well as personal, but that, if people of another creed prefer to rest on the first day instead of on the seventh, there is no reason not to employ their labour. The Sabbath is to be called a 'delight' and an 'acceptable day to the Lord', and there should be no difficulty in arranging such a change of occupation as will satisfy

these titles. It is ill dogmatizing about details, but life, I believe, will seem fuller and less fleeting if the tale of weeks be punctuated with Sabbaths.

There is still to be considered the catalogue of ordinances, recommendations, and prohibitions, ranging, as I explained in the last chapter, from neighbourly love to the shape of a man's beard, and providing, as a whole, an almost cyclopædic guide to the conduct and hygiene of life. If such life, indeed, were twice as long as it is, and three times as beautiful, if it were now as it was then, the modern Jew would find no difficulty in observing every ordinance of his code. But this standard of observance contemplated, and still requires, a set of conditions different from those of to-day. Life was leisurely and minute ; a day's journey was not measured by the motor-car ; the world was not circumvented by electricity ; men found time to say God be with you, and not clip it to good-bye. For better or worse—or let me be frankly optimistic, and declare my creed that it is for better—we do clip our leisure to-day. The little courtesies disappear. We cut our cloth according to our

measure, and have no time to lace a ruff, or to trim a peruke, or to give our Lord double bowings. The omission of 'second day' observance may be defended on this ground pre-eminently. It was introduced in an age when the exclusion of the Jews from participation in the world's affairs threw them back on the resources of religion ; and, with commendable lack of originality, instead of inventing new feasts, they doubled the old.

I confess to similar time-serving in regard to some older ordinances. It is not difficult to defend a retention of the laws as to intermarriage, circumcision, and *barmitzvah,* and a simultaneous repudiation of the dietary laws and sundry minor injunctions. No amount of discipline or repression can put back the hands of the clock, or undo the work of our fathers in opening the Ghetto gates. The common rights for which they fought so strenuously bring common duties in their train. Let us frankly remember that heroes of liberation have been added to the heroes of the Law. The book of Jewish history is never closed, and the calendar of Hebrew saints has been reinforced since Moses and the Prophets.

In England we cannot refuse a place in the Pantheon to men like Lionel Rothschild and David Salomons, who, at considerable personal sacrifice, and not for personal aggrandizement, taught Englishmen how to practise liberty. 'The ghetto', says a writer in the new *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 'which had been designed as a sort of quarantine to safeguard Christendom from the Jewish heresy, had in fact proved a storage chamber for a portion of the political and social forces which were destined to sweep away the last traces of feudalism from central Europe.' We, revisiting the Middle Ages in the daily columns of Russian correspondence, see these stored-up forces reissuing from the ghettoes of the Tsar ; and the grand, pitiful spectacle should remind us that, if liberty was worth winning, if it was well to emerge from the ghetto, then the spirit of the men who compassed it is a part of the Jewish inheritance, and reform is as logical and defensible as Mosaic Judaism itself. We let reform come in by a back door. We slip and slide, and drift away from so-called legal Judaism into a species of liberal Judaism, which does not necessarily correspond to the

actual progress made—and made deliberately by earnest Jews—in the direction of logical reform. Often we let go what we should retain, and cling to what were well omitted. Our want of systematic thought, our indolence in recognizing facts, and in drawing the correct deductions, loosen bonds which should never be dissolved, and tighten restrictions which irk without uniting. We are tolerant of such grave lapses as intermarriage and the disuse of the Hebrew language in prayer, and we set undue value on the distinction between *trifa* and *kosher*. A very little logical thought, a single sitting of a conference, would speedily lead to a philosophic reconstruction of the tenets of Judaism. That 'there arose not a prophet since like Moses' does not rob later prophets of all their glory, and we who cheerfully accept the benefit of their hard-won victories should be the last to deny them their rightful issue in reform. Our present attitude is unreasonable and harmful in the extreme. We enjoy the social advantages of emancipation and liberty, but we retain unchanged the antiquated sociological system. We refuse to correlate facts, and to see life steadily and whole. We

are none of us 'orthodox' in the fullest sense of the term, but we lack the common courage to collect and collate our convictions, and to codify them as reform. In other words, it is time to recognize what I described above, speaking of the Levitical precepts, as their 'differences in space, a nearness and a remoteness in respect to their distance from the goal'. By requiring our liberties from the nations, we implicitly repealed some of the ordinances which kept us aloof. Acts of Parliament commonly conclude with a formal clause of revocation, essential to the validity of the new code. The charter won by the heroes of the removal of Jewish disabilities requires for its complete validity the formal repeal of certain sections and sub-sections of earlier legislation. Which these are should be a matter of general consent, not, as now, of personal opinion.

One word must be added for completeness. I have urged in these chapters on practical Judaism two seemingly contrary arguments: first, the duty of observance; and, secondly, the duty of reform. But, the parodox notwithstand-

ing, I am convinced that, on any other method except the fashionable one of 'muddling through', the contradiction is apparent, and not real. Any sound attempt at reconciliation—the proposition can be stated quite generally—between experience and the God-idea, which move in different planes of understanding, must take account of two perceptions: one, the nature of religion; and, two, its function at the present time. These are the universal and the particular, out of which truth is quickened. If legal Judaism, so-called, could be proved to lay fetters on the intellect, by all means let rationalism release it. But if its conservation, as I believe, conserves liberty of thought, and if no system of thought attains to the height of freedom without providing for the expression of the religious mood, then, always presuming an intelligent apprehension in the patient, a conservative attitude towards religion promotes the free use of the mental faculties. That Judaism encourages this attitude by its own historical tact—I can find no more suitable word—the following considerations will help to show.

Philosophers treat liberty as Cæsar treated

ancient Gaul ; they divide it into three provinces—political, moral, and intellectual. With the standard of political freedom which the Old Testament upholds, we are not immediately concerned. As a fact, the authors of certain passages have little to learn from England as to the nature and boon of free political institutions. It will be enough to refer to the covenant, for instance, which the God of *Exodus* made with the children of Israel ; to *Exodus*, xix, 4, 5, 6 : ' Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people ; for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.' Or *Numbers*, xi, 27, 28, 29 : ' And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Art thou envious for my sake ? Would God that all the Lord's people were

prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.' This is something of what Spinoza meant by the Hebrew theocracy, the state of government in which piety and patriotism, divine law and human law, were indistinguishable ; the state of religious and political existence in which the ideal of liberty was best realized because the true and the false, the legitimate and the illegitimate, *fas* and *nefas* in every department of thought and action, were clearly marked off from each other by unmistakeable differences. The evildoer was at the same time a fool ; he had no excuse for wrongdoing ; liberty was like the air he breathed ; it was necessary while it was free.

This theocracy disappeared. History built a wall which shut us out from the enjoyment of the political province of Old Testament liberty. Our dispersion among other nations throws us back with a stronger attachment to the other provinces of freedom, the provinces which do not require territorial conditions for human appropriation and enjoyment. If one organ is atrophied, the others become keener and more vivid ; if the political liberty of the Jews, *quâ* a Jewish institu-

tion is an unwritten chapter of history, and for practical purposes a dead letter, the moral and intellectual provinces acquire a greater interest and power. Our title as a free people rests upon these, not on that ; these are our title-deeds of liberty ; this is the banner which we hold up in the van of civilized peoples. For, obviously, the degree of freedom which we enjoy in civil and national life is regulated by other laws than the Jewish. Its foundation is in Roman Law and not in the Mosaic Code ; and unless we can show that our degree of moral and intellectual freedom entitles us to claim our place among the nations that dare to love liberty, we have no independence worth fighting for.

The Prophets did not live too early to see the force of this argument. It is to them that we turn and to the authors of the psalter for that defence of intellectual liberty which we require to-day. Professor Lazarus—and I am glad to have his authority for what I wish to prove—speaks in one place of the Exodus from Egypt, and of the ethical significance which that event assumed in various epochs of Jewish history. The example is particularly instructive be-

cause the Exodus was itself a liberation and a working example of the theory of liberty. 'Even in the Pentateuch', says Lazarus, 'ethical teachings are connected with Egyptian reminiscences. There it is the memory of the sojourn in Egypt, the condition of the people as aliens and as an oppressed class, that is used as the vehicle of ethical commands, especially to dispose the people to justice or gentleness towards the stranger, to mildness and magnanimity towards the downtrodden, For ye know well the spirit of the stranger.' There is the lesson of Egypt as applied by national Israel to less fortunate peoples than himself. When the national power was broken, and the national consciousness survived as a kind of spiritual and intellectual sanction, a new meaning or moral was read into the story of the Exodus. 'The Prophets and Psalmists', says Lazarus, 'employ the great historical event to give reality chiefly to the religious idea of God's providence and grace. The Rabbis finally deduce from it the two fundamental elements of man's ethical education: the notion of liberty and the notion of man's ethical task.' Political

and even civil freedom was lost. . . . Yet the notion of liberty, inner moral and spiritual liberty, cherished as a pure, exalted ideal . . . was associated with the memory of the redemption from slavery.' And later on he says, 'the sacrificial cult common to all was replaced by a purer, more spiritual divine service, and by firmer religious laws, symbol at once of ethical obedience, and of the ethical communion.'

Thus we see how readily the Rabbis applied the object-lessons of history to the ceremonies of observance and the moral laws of conduct. I return to this invaluable work on *The Ethics of Judaism* for another quotation appropriate to my own argument: 'Everybody', Professor Lazarus says, 'is expected to draw truth from the original sources by the exertion of his own strength and at his own peril.' This, if we think of it, is a great saying. 'The Talmud', he continues, 'makes distinct reference to the fact that later prophets contradicted Mosaic words and substituted their own thoughts. The principle stated by Rabbi Simon ben Lakish that "sometimes to annul a law is to establish it", was properly adopted.

Reform—a new conception—often furnishes the real justification for a law which, in its earlier shape, has become irrelevant and inexpedient. Reform, therefore, is pre-eminently conservative. . . . . The Judaism of the past presents two doctrinal opinions, in fact, it divided into two opposing tendencies. Let us call the one, traditionalism, the other, rationalism. But the latter is to be taken in a most restricted sense, and is as consistently conservative as its antagonistic trend of thought.'

In the many phases of the conflict between unilluminated reason and uncharitable imagination, a religious-minded man might do worse than to take as his motto the maxim of Simon ben Lakish, 'Sometimes to annul a law is to establish it', with the corollary of Professor Lazarus, 'Reform, therefore, is pre-eminently conservative'. Certainly, if Lazarus is right, there is at least a decent case for a man who ventures to describe himself as a conservative Jew, and who yet deems it consistent to use his reason as well as his memory in the observance of the Divine Law. 'Such a course admits of real progress in law-

making, of positive development : even new laws may arise. . . . This method, consciously pursued since Hillel's time, was primarily calculated to apply the spirit of old laws to completely transformed and newly-arisen conditions '—just as, I may add in parenthesis, the ethical value of the Exodus presented one front to the Jews under Moses, and another to the Jews under the Romans. ' Its scope was enlarged to include ordinances which abrogated a distinct Biblical law, or sanctioned its evasion, in order to ensure the fulfilment of its spirit and purpose.'

Here are chapter and verse for the contention urged above that conservative Judaism requires in places the addition of a formal clause of repeal to certain articles in its code. I cannot do more than state the conservative sanction of rationalism ; do more, that is, than claim a right for the conservative Jew, a right based on his conservatism, to think in religious affairs for himself, and ' to draw truth from the original sources by the exertion of his own strength and at his own peril '. I am not prepared to say how far my strength would avail in this direction, how much courage a busy life leaves

me to enter on this perilous quest ; nor yet, from the other point of view, to what extent I prefer, with a conscious shrinking from such a trial, to rest on the bosom of tradition, and to accept the direction of the past for my conduct in the present. My personal sentiment in this connection is immaterial to the argument. My plea is this : Traditionalism and rationalism are two facets of the same jewel, twin elements in conservative Judaism. Memory and reason, in simpler words, are both essential to an intelligent and a living faith. Personally, I may think that the former element is more important on the public side of the creed, which must by its nature be preserved in a form which is partly a compromise, and that the reasoning element belongs to private conduct and belief : but really the two coalesce at so many points that it is unwise to insist on a distinction. Each age has its own conventions. To each in turn is addressed the warning against a blind acquiescence in the things of men who are their own witnesses, 'They have not known nor understood'; of each in turn it is true 'that he cannot deliver his soul'; that deliverance by know-

ledge, the liberty of reason, is wanting, till each man shall say of his own *eidolon*: 'Is there not a lie in my right hand?'

Finally, the relations of law to life demand a fearless and an uncompromising honesty. The springs of religion reside in the rocky fastnesses of character, not in details of observance. Sham, mockery, and humbug are comparatively easy to detect; but there is a specious parade of piety—a kind of external conformity—which expresses no real feeling, and the colours of which do not penetrate the surface. The preacher must constantly be confronted with this problem; he inveighs from the pulpit against absentee seatholders, but he is conscious all the while that many of the absent have more title to the religious life than some of his regular congregants. I need not discuss this paradox, beyond expressing my conviction that, if religious observances are properly founded on the religious sense, such distinction between God's religious man and man's religious man will tend to disappear. In former times and in other churches the artificiality of observance was fostered by elaborate schemes of venal 'dispensations'. It is

our business to reduce to a vanishing point the possibility of artificialness, by making religious observances as natural as possible an expression of the religious mind. Train the mind to apprehend and to appreciate the beauties of Jewish thought and the value of Jewish beliefs, and trust, even unto seventy times seven, that the fault lies in the training if the expression prove halting or inadequate. Aim high; sanctify ceremonies by idealism, and prove ideals by ceremonialism. The Hebrew, like Jacob at Luz, discovers God in unexpected places. His religion is a consecration of the commonplace.

CHAPTER IV

Jew and Gentile

I. In the Past

No account of the Jewish religion, no attempt to guide or to mark its stages of development, can neglect the social side of the history of the Jews. They are represented to-day, on a moderate computation, by more than eleven million survivors of nearly two thousand years of persecution. The calculation is reached as follows: The latest statistics of Jewish population put their number at 11,167,654, and the twenty centuries of persecution are made up by the 1906 years now complete in our calendar, with an allowance for the oppression of the Romans prior to the commencement of the civil era, while the Russian atrocities of the present century preclude, it need hardly be added, any deduction from the total at this end of the scale.

In the first place, the mere existence of the Jews—apart from their numbers and their influence—is a fact in 'ethology' of the utmost interest and importance. By every known law of history this unfortunate people should have been crushed out of existence several centuries ago. They have lacked even the first of the conditions which have favoured the survival, say, of the negroes in America. They have nowhere been an aboriginal tribe, gradually suffering displacement by the overgrowth of a more highly civilized community. They have never possessed the condition or instinct of nationality supplied by the sense of a common language and soil, which accounts, as in Norway and Hungary, not merely for the survival but for the revival of nations. Scattered and driven, as they have always been, expelled even from England under Edward I, and excluded to a certain degree under Edward VII, the Jews have clung to corporate existence with a baffling tenacity, and have exhibited in every age and country an extraordinary faculty for constructing on the barest basis of toleration a firm and an eminent

stronghold. Take the annals of their history where we will; we shall find that it follows the same course, through oppression, persecution, and ostracism, to secret or overt power.

Take, as a typical instance, the annals of the Jews in France. There were Church laws against the Jews as early as A.D. 465, and within the next hundred years the Merovingian Councils forbade Jews to be judges or tax-collectors, or to exercise any civic or administrative rights over Christians, unless they had been previously baptized. The Jews might not appear in public during Holy Week, nor walk before ecclesiastics, nor convert or torture Christian slaves. In A.D. 629 King Dagobert proposed to drive from his domains all Jews who would not accept Christianity. In the Carlovingian period the Jews were again numerous in France, but their position was regulated by law. Their commercial importance may be gathered from the fact that Isaac the Jew was a member of Charlemagne's embassy in 797 to the Court of Haroun-al-Rashid, and King Louis le Debonnaire at the beginning of the ninth

century took the Jews under his protection with special reference to their position as merchants. The next three centuries witnessed the transformation of French society under the development of the feudal system and the organization of trade-gilds. Both lines of progress proved oppressive to the Jews, inasmuch as they contained the elements of greed and exclusiveness which subsequently found expression in the religious crusades. French Judaism and Franco-Jewish culture flourished despite these conditions. The Rabbinical schools rendered learning illustrious, and a line of scholars and poets led up to the famous names of Gershon, the 'Light of the Exile', and Rashi of Troyes, in whom is personified the genius of northern French Judaism. 'Thenceforth', in the words of Professor Gottheil of Columbia University, 'French Judaism becomes one of the poles of universal Judaism'[1].

The story of the intervening centuries need not detain us in detail. In 1096 the heroes of First Crusade shut up the Jews of Rouen in

[1] See *The Jewish Encyclopædia* (Funk and Wagnalls), *s.v.* France.

a church, and put them to the sword without distinction of age or sex. In the time of the Second Crusade a grandson of Rashi was among the victims of its zeal, and it is especially noticeable for the purpose of this character-study that two terrible legacies were bequeathed to the Jews of Europe by these two crusading expeditions. The first was the charge of ritual murder, and the second was the trade of usury. Each is directly to be traced to the same historical cause. Macaulay's schoolboy is aware that King Richard I of England was unable to get home till an enormous ransom had been paid for him; and generally, it may be said, that the soldiers and adventurers who set out for the Holy Land were obliged to raise money for their daily necessities as well as for the exigencies of warfare. The easiest course was to go to the Jews—in a phrase which has become proverbial—and to change solid Jewish merchants, pursuing an honourable and a useful livelihood, into miserable usurers, demanding exorbitant rates of interest for loans which they did not wish to lend, and for which they could take no

security. And as to the charge of ritual murder: here were the soldiers of the Cross, thirsting for blood and adventure, and bound for Jerusalem on a quest which aroused the worst passions of fanaticism, and there were the descendants of the people who had crucified the Christ. What better excuse could they seek for extorting money at the sword's-point?, and in what more likely flesh should they baptize their dedicated steel?

This summary does not wholly account for the evil qualities of the Jews; still less must it be taken to contain or convey the whole history of the Crusades. At the most, it suggests some effects produced on the character of the Jews, not merely in France, but in other countries from which the Crusaders were drawn, or through which they passed, in that epoch of ignorant superstition, of harsh use of physical superiority, and of lawlessness only checked by fear. Two invariable factors contributed to the same result: the one was the separateness of the Jews, rendering them liable to all kinds of suspicion; and the other was the high moral and mental standard which tended to make them the

objects of jealousy and hate on the part of the majority from whom they held aloof.

These seeds, then, were sown early. The oppression by rods in France was a scourge of scorpions in Germany. About 12,000 Jews are said to have perished by massacre in the Rhenish cities alone between May and July, 1096. The crimes of ritual murder, of desecration of the Host, of poisoning the wells, and so forth, were freely imputed to them; and rumours once set afoot were more difficult to arrest then than now, more particularly as the channels of information would be closed to contrary statements. Popular feeling was inflamed, and no accusation was too wild to find its acceptance and its consequences. The Black Death was ascribed to the Jews in the middle of the fourteenth century, and caused another general slaughter throughout the provinces of Germany.

The record of slaughter and expulsion during the Middle Ages, the attempts to solve the Jewish question by extermination, may be stated categorically: in 1096 there were massacres of the Jews by the Crusaders on a large scale at Metz, Spiers, Worms, Mayence

(where the slain are said to have numbered over a thousand), Cologne, and its neighbouring villages, Treves, Regensburg, and other Rhenish cities. When these Crusaders reached Jerusalem in July, 1099, they signalized their success by driving all the Jews of that city into one of the synagogues, and there burning them alive. The Second Crusade in the middle of the twelfth century was also marked by Jewish persecutions in various parts of western Christendom; and every Englishman is aware that, in September, 1199, when Richard I was starting for the Third Crusade, his followers, assisted by the populace, attacked the Jews of Stamford, Bury St Edmunds, Colchester, and other towns, while in York, on the following March 16th, a hundred and fifty Jews of all ages, with their Rabbi at their head, killed themselves in order to escape slaughter or baptism. It has been correctly remarked that economically and socially alike the Crusades were disastrous for the Jews of Europe, and we note that after their date there begins that series of expulsions of the Jewish communities from various countries, among which may

be mentioned the exodus of 16,000 Jews from England under Edward I; the well-known exodus from Spain under Torquemada, by whom it was said that at least 2,000 Jews had been burnt at the stake, and whose record in other respects as the head of the Grand Inquisition adds a painful chapter to the history of his peninsula; the expulsion from France in 1182, and the second expulsion from that country in 1306, followed by a third in 1394, as well as Germany's record, which included the expulsion from Silesia. Thus, it may fairly be said that history from early in the Middle Ages gave the Jews a bad name, and it is equally fair to add that the responsible makers of history—the kings and statesmen of the succeeding centuries—contributed very powerfully to the aim of making the Jews live down to the bad name that had attached to them.

There are certain native Jewish characteristics which tend to make them less than thoroughly good citizens. By their observance of a separate Sabbath, and by the Levitical precepts which required them to abstain from certain foods, and only to eat others

prepared in a particular way, the Jews earned a reputation for holding aloof from their fellow-men, not merely in their religious devotions, but also to some extent in their social intercourse. The strict law against the intermarriage of Jews with Gentiles has, of course, contributed to this result. These tendencies may be said to grow less, according as the country in which the Jews reside maintains a liberal attitude towards its inhabitants, of whatever denomination. But the policy of European rulers in the centuries succeeding to the Crusades was diametrically opposed to this enlightened principle. They pent the Jews into Ghettoes where every separatist instinct was bound to develop itself to the utmost extent of its power, and then they issued manifestoes and State papers accusing the Jews of holding aloof from their fellow-men.

Mr Israel Zangwill's imagination has reconstructed the Ghetto-life, and helps us to realize the sentiments of its inhabitants. He writes that its 'gates were closed at midnight and opened in the morning, unless it was the Sabbath or a Christian holiday, when they

remained shut all day, so that no Jew could go in or out of the court, the street, the big and little square, and the one or two tiny alleys that made up the Ghetto. At night the watchmen rowed round and round its canals in large *barcas*, which the Jews had to pay for'. But one day it happened that a child found his way out of the Ghetto, and Mr Zangwill describes the 'wonder and perturbation' which woke in him at the sight of the most ordinary scenes of the city of Venice in which this sketch is placed. The whole of this story, which only occupies a few pages of *The Dreamers of the Ghetto*, is itself a remarkable character-study, for it points the significance—not merely for one small child of the Ghetto, but for generation after generation of Jews who were born and bred within the area of those sealed gates—of that forcible exclusion from the əfil and movement and progress which the outside world was making. To describe these centuries of Jewish history as a period of imprisonment within a Ghetto, chequered by spasms of hate which led to massacre and torture, is doubtless an exaggeration; but

in studying the character of the Jews considerable weight must be given to those years of extraordinary experience, when, with intellects above the common, and with every ability to take part in the drama of human affairs, they were subjected to the severest bondage, both of body and of soul. In the years when society as a whole was released from the trammels of feudalism, and moved steadily towards a degree of independence and self-assertion, the tendency of the treatment meted out to the Jews was towards segregation, dependence, and that particular psychological condition which is described as self-involution.

It should be possible at this stage to discover and to give names to a few, at least, of the characteristics which the Jews of the European Ghettoes would be likely to have acquired when the time came for their emancipation. The first and most obvious of these is the quality of narrowness. A narrow sky and narrow streets produce inevitably the effect of narrowing the mental horizon and the emotional compass of those who are thus restricted. With this narrowness there

would go a large degree of self-absorption. Shut in with their own interests, and shut out from the movements of the world without, the Jews would be compelled more and more to rely on their own resources, and to develop in an intense degree the possibilities open to them within the limits imposed by the Ghetto walls. The schools of commentators and Talmudists which grew up within those walls carried the study of their texts to the utmost limit of pedantic scholarship. They teased and worried it into anagrams and acrostics for lack of those vivifying influences which dwellers outside the walls received, as it were, through the pores of their skin. If we could imagine a Baconian fanatic shut up in a Shakespeiaran library, not merely for the term of his natural life, but through the lives of generations of his descendants, and can conceive the use to which he would put this enforced study of his subject, we shall have some idea of the labour bestowed by the Jews of the Middle Ages on the interpretation and annotation of the works of their own religion.

Again, and in the same context, while traders outside the Ghetto were constantly

brought into contact with the wider ideas derived from the discoveries of geographers, of astronomers and explorers, so that even if they were engaged in trade—one might say especially if they were engaged in trade—their business would be filled with romantic possibilities, and would touch at every point the fringe of romantic adventure, Jewish men of business on the contrary were restricted to the ugliest side of that business of exchange. They missed its more ennobling and inspiring aspects, and had little or no cause to regard it from any higher standard than that of the ledger and the scales.

A third characteristic which was certain to be developed under these conditions is that of fear, with its close ally cunning. Even when the fear of actual physical persecution was removed, or was at any rate so occasional as to be negligible for years together, the Jews were constantly oppressed by the yet more humiliating fear of giving offence, of being laughed at, and of being spat at; and this fear which was carried about with them by day and by night would surely induce a cunning and a cringing attitude towards

those who had it in their power to make the conditions of Ghetto life even more intolerable than they were. Somewhat akin to this last characteristic would be that of assimilativeness. The fear of drawing attention to themselves by being different from others would lead them to try to escape attention by becoming like others in external things. The Jew may be said to be naturally dramatic, and his adaptiveness, of which we hear and see very much at the present day, may, in all probability, be traced to this eagerness to assume the colours of his environment in order to assist his struggle for survival. Another characteristic which, whether natural or not, must certainly have been intensified by the experience of the Middle Ages, is the acquisitiveness of the Jews. It may be that they have a native prejudice in favour of surrounding themselves with the best of material things, but this tendency, which might have been corrected under happier conditions, could not but have been developed to the utmost of its capacity in these uncomfortable Ghettoes. The Jew who got on best, who became most powerful in a worldly

sense, was most likely to have the acerbities of his lot alleviated and to win a position of contemptuous toleration when his business brought him into contact with the big men of the city outside.

There is another characteristic, perhaps entirely due to the effects of historical environment. The solidarity of the Jews is a phrase which was very freely used at the time of the agitation about the aliens. In seeking the cause of this solidarity, which is an undoubted factor in Jewish life, one tends to forget that, historically, it is by no means a quality which one would expect to find. The Jews have no common soil, no common spoken language, and hardly a common religion, so different are the aspects of that religion in various countries, and in various sections of those who practise it. Moreover, the self-interest of the Jews is all against their hanging together, and all in favour of their adopting the politics and prejudices of the country in which they reside. Yet so strong is the tradition set by the common interests of the Ghetto that Jewish solidarity is a more marked characteristic to-day than

the self-interest of scattered communities of the Jews.

The question plainly arises in an unprejudiced mind: how has it happened that, with every historical cause for extinction, and with every cause for the development of the Jews into a race as black as their enemies paint them, they have yet had a force within themselves which has enabled them not merely to survive, but to exhibit virtues and capacities which qualify them to take a leading part in whatever country their lot may fall?

The great corrective in the Jewish character which was not due to historical environment, though it was intensified by the conditions of that environment, was supplied by the Jew's immense talent and power of idealization. It may safely be said that had it not been for his capacity of abstracting himself from the sordid and painful realities of his existence into the ideal world which every tenet of his faith helped to make actual to his imagination, the Jew would never have survived the experience of hate and humiliation which pursued him through so many centuries.

This idealizing power operated in the greatest and in the least of his daily habits and happenings. The ceremonial of the Jewish religion, as required by the Levitical ordinances, and as elaborated by subsequent and less inspired legislators, was directed throughout to the consecration of the commonplace. Its object was to endow the least elevated of common duties with a sense of responsibility, and to co-ordinate the whole series of physical and moral functions under the same category of cleanliness and holiness. Regulations as to food and dress, as to marriage and other social acts, as to worship and other religious acts, were all alike intended to familiarize the Jew with the idea of the omnipresence and the omniscience of the Deity. In the result they served—as indeed they serve to this day—to impart a very special degree of homeliness and affection to Jewish family life. Mr Zangwill, in the story I have mentioned, relates very cleverly how the blood of the boy seemed to leap when the chant of the ancient scroll trilled suddenly into bird-songs, and this leaping of the blood at the sounds which delighted our fathers

illustrates my meaning here. Each common meal becomes a kind of sacrament; each family function a kind of religious celebration; and every religious celebration is marked by a sense of respectful familiarity with the Deity, which strikes an incongruous note on Western notions of decorum. To this world of duties and sentiments which was purposely filled to the brim by the Rabbis and Talmudists, the Jew of mediæval Christendom was glad to escape from those who persecuted and contemned him. There he found complete satisfaction for his emotional capacity; and if, as Matthew Arnold tells us, religion is 'morality tinged by emotion', it may readily be conceived that the emotional tinge in the religion of the Jew tended to overwhelm the other elements, and to make religion itself merely an expression of the emotions. The Jew did good according to his lights, not because he was told to do good, still less because he was afraid to do evil, but because he loved good, and because, through the performance of it, and in the performance of it, he was enabled to steep himself in the atmosphere of that

inner world to which, without regard to his inclination, he was constantly compelled to return by the mere force of external circumstances.

Thus, broadly speaking, we can follow the Jewish development of character along two main lines of evolution. History made him the craven, the money-grubber, the usurer, the blood-sucker, as he is represented in Russia and elsewhere to-day, and as we meet him in modern works of fiction. But his power of idealization counteracted to a great extent the influence of the harsh realities of life, and must be taken into account in any attempt to estimate the effect on the character of the Jews of the experiences through which they have passed. Without such counteracting influence their survival is inconceivable. At the mercy of the swords of the Crusaders, racked by the torments and burned by the fires of the Inquisition, despised as alien, and rejected as unclean, ostracized not merely from social intercourse, but likewise from industrial and commercial affairs except under conditions which compelled them to earn a livelihood in sordid and mean pursuits,

liable to spoliation if they succeeded, and to expulsion if their numbers rendered them obnoxious, or if their poverty rendered them burdensome, or if the State was covetous of their wealth; driven in tortuous ways and habituated to a cringing attitude, forfeiting their Maccabæan dower of courage by long desuetude of arms—what chance would they have had of maintaining throughout the ages the high standard of living which is the hygienic condition of physical perpetuation, or the intellectual ambition which is its spiritual concomitant, if their religion had not taught them hope, pride, and self-control, while their history bred in them despair, humiliation, and self-abasement? This contrast may be overdrawn; the Jewish record in epitome compels the use of strong colours, but I venture to ask—where is the downtrodden race to-day which the history of the Jews should have produced, a race more deeply sunken in ignominy than the negroes of America? Where are the pessimists and negationists whom that experience should have produced on the intellectual side? And, failing these products, how else are

we to account for the Jews as they are except by the operation of a force within themselves stronger than the forces which sought to crush them, and stronger yet through the suffering induced ?

A German historian has said, in language which sears the conscience of students of history : 'The Christians themselves bound the rods with which Jewish usurers have scourged them [1].' The epigram sums up effectively the considerations here advanced, and partly to the same cause may be ascribed the characteristics which the Jew exhibits when he is released from his Ghetto. For we have to account for the Jewish character as it is displayed to-day, with its curious contrasts of an infinite capacity for self-sacrifice and an infinite love of self-display ; a material vulgarity which offends the ears and eyes of decorous occidental neighbours, and a spiritual sublimity which—measured even by the entries in the pass-books of the bank of charity —touches a height unequalled by disciples of the Gospel. In this connection I may

[1] *Die geistigen und sozialen Strömungen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts.* By Professor Ziegler.

urge that emancipation and equal rights are new toys for the Jews, and they play with them like children. The gross materialism which strikes the outside observer is likely to yield to time when the toys become familiar. It is impossible to believe that the force which sweetened and transmuted the experience of hate and persecution should lose its efficacy in the face of the opportunities offered by prosperity. That the Jew should be an idealist through ill-fortune, and a materialist in good, is against the laws of human character, as illustrated throughout his strange history. It is the novelty which betrays him into flaunting his new possession at all seasons and in all places. Remember that barely sixty years have passed since Macaulay was throwing the weight of his influence with the Whigs into the scale of the movement for admitting Jews into Parliament. To-day a Jew, Disraeli, has been Prime Minister of England, and added the Imperial title to the British Crown. Another Jew, the late Sir Julian Goldsmid, has presided over the deliberations of the House of Commons; and another occupies a post in

the Liberal Government of to-day. This alone—to pursue the subject into no more vulgar channels of comparative figures—will indicate the rapidity of the movement associated with the repeal of Jewish disabilities in England.

The Jew, like Browning's lover, may be said to have two soul-sides. The one which he turns to the world is eager to assert his new independence of the world's toleration and approval. Not for two thousand years or more has the Jew in a Christian community been in a position to say: 'I am as good as you, as free as you, as powerful as you. See, here are the symbols of my equal footing in your world.' But his other side he turns to the near, strange, familiar, exacting, stern but comforting spirit which, like the genius of Socrates, has accompanied the pilgrimage of his race, leading it, as by a fire in the night and a pillar of cloud in the day, through the wilderness of more than three-score generations to the land of promise not its own. And this other soul-side, which he turns to the spirit of his race, is, we doubt not, as meek, as brave, as confident, and as

pure as in the days when he was told 'Ye are my witnesses, My people whom I have chosen.' For this vivid and actual article of the Hebrew creed, in whose light, as their Rabbis teach them, all their arrogance is ignorance, has resisted throughout the ages the attacks of time and chance; has helped the ship of the Ark to survive the perils of persecution, and the worse perils of assimilation, and has contributed its noteworthy share to that complex historical product, the modern Jew.

Let us hear at this point how he strikes some of his contemporaries. Mr Arnold White, who poses as the candid friend of the Jews, in the evidence which he gave before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, stated his opinion that the Jews 'are not unpopular in certain ways, but they have the reputation among those who are in contact with them of crawling, underhand ways. They are not remarkable for crimes of violence. The knifing is not traced to the Jewish immigrants at all, as far as I can get at the facts; but as regards perjury, lying, and cheating, the evidence of the magistrates, I

think, will produce a great effect on the Commission' ; and he alleged as the reason for the ingenious cruelty of the Russian anti-Semitic legislation 'the belief which is shared by the educated and uneducated classes alike in Russia, that if Russia were to open the door of the Pale, and give the Jewish subjects of the Tsar equality before the law, not ten years would pass away before every post of importance in the Empire would either be occupied or controlled by members of that race, while the manual labourer and the *moujiks* would become the serfs of Semitic money-lenders.' Perhaps this 'belief' is to be taken as the justification of the present atrocities. From other witnesses who gave evidence before the Royal Commission the following pieces of characterization may be selected. The Jews were described by one witness as 'a dirty lot altogether'. Another stated that 'they are dirty, and filthy, and disgraceful in an English country' ; though he held out the hope that 'We shall turn them from their dirty habits in time' ; and a third witness, who seems to have had the faculty of looking a little below the surface,

could find nothing less unfavourable to say than that 'The alien, not very clean at first, soon accommodates himself to local conditions. There is, of course, the inevitable residuum who are steadfastly dirty—simply irreclaimable. They get into a hopeless plight, inseparable from squalor and insanitation. Some are apparently ignorant of the most elementary needs towards cleanliness. Much of this is due to their busy lives. They habitually make labour their existence, surrendering themselves to the obligations of earning a living. Bed to work, and work to bed, theirs is truly a mechanical life. It cannot altogether be wondered at that they neglect and ignore the very essentials of a decent existence.'

I have tried to show the essential contradiction between the character of the Jews as here represented, according to the best knowledge of their neighbours and oppressors, and the character which belongs to them by the inalienable right of heredity and of descent. The histories of Josephus give us a very different idea of the qualities which the Jews displayed while they enjoyed indepen-

dence, and in those early years of terrible experience when they were fighting for that independence against tremendous odds. And the subsequent history of the Jews, as told by Graetz and others, will be found to reflect what Walter Pater in another context called 'a wild light breaking on their graves'. In those annals will be found example after example of heroic endurance, of patience ten times refined by the fire of persecution, of devotion to religion in a sense hardly conceivable in these days. For the religion of the Jews in past ages meant to them not merely the promise of a heaven far off, but their home in the present, and the actual promise of a Messiah who might arrive in any age, and who, in fact, was welcomed in more than one false appearance by that people, ever hopeful, ever trustful, ever confident that their sufferings and their sacrifices were but milestones on the road to Palestine, and that they were only repeating the experiences of their forefathers in Egypt, and slowly accumulating the bricks which should build them the third temple of their dreams.

There are those among them to-day who are devoting the best part of their lives to the realization of those dreams. Mr Zangwill, Mr Lucien Wolf, and others are actively associated with a movement which is known as the Jewish Territorial Organization. It has attracted the sympathy of men as diverse in their tastes as Mr Chamberlain and Mr Holman Hunt, and, whatever my personal sympathies may be, whether or not I believe that it is practicable or desirable to draft the Jewish fugitives from South-Eastern Europe into a far-off colony where they are to fend for themselves, I may yet claim that this scheme would never have entered into the region of practical politics if the only surviving qualities of the Jews were those which they had acquired in the course of their historical experience. If this were the end, if the prosperous Jews of Western Europe were as prone to materialism, or if the Jews in adversity in the South-East were as deeply degraded as contemporary history would have us believe, then Mr Zangwill and his supporters would be crying in the void, and the Jewish Territorial Organization would be

the shadow of a name, as ineffective and unreal as the Pantisocracy of a hundred years ago. If history had said the last word on the character of the Jews they would never have produced in the last decade of the nineteenth century a Zionist leader of the type of Theodor Herzl, who was afire with enthusiasm for their national regeneration, and who burnt out his short life in the ardour of that dream. For the Jews are to-day, as ever, a great ethical paradox, and I may fitly conclude my attempt to point this paradox with a quotation from Carlyle, who writes of his Hero as priest: 'How far such Ideals can ever be introduced into practice, and at what point our impatience with their non-introduction ought to begin, is always a question. I think we may say safely, Let them introduce themselves as far as they can contrive to do it. We will praise the Hero-priest, who does what is in *him* to bring them in, and wears out in toil, calumny, contradiction, a noble life, in his endeavour to make a God's Kingdom of this Earth.'

CHAPTER V

Jew and Gentile

II. In the Present

This chapter, unlike the one before, is addressed to Jews rather than to Gentiles. The Jew's relationship to his environment was decided in the past by forces outside of his control. Their present relationship is largely in his own making, and it requires a certain amount of courage for one member of the religious and social democracy of the Jews to discuss how it should be made. Let me therefore say at once that I am writing without responsibility except to myself alone. Modern Judaism in relation to the State means, in a sense, ourselves in relation to our neighbours. But it might be mistaken to mean the rest of the Jews in relation to my neighbours ; the difference being that in the latter case I should be assumed to arrogate to myself the invidious position of offering

advice from a detached point of view, whereas the chief desire of which I am conscious is to submit my ideas to the clarifying process of expression, and so to gain assistance in determining the questions to be decided.

For what are these questions in the first place ? We are acquainted intimately enough with the Jewish Question from the outside —the Jewish Question, as it presents itself to the ministers of the Roumanian Government ; the Jewish Question, as it appears in Russian villages and towns ; the Jewish Question, as it is interpreted by the Chauvinists of economic Germany, by the priest-ridden patriots of France, by the Nationalists of the decadent Empire which is ruled by the oldest and, perhaps, the wisest Prince in Europe. These facts of modern Jewish politics are unfortunately beyond disguise. We may even mark the evil nearer home. We are aware, if we hesitate to admit it, that in the great English-speaking country which inscribed the proud name of Liberty on the first independent coinage that it issued—the United States of America—there is in force at this hour a social ostracism of the Jews,

which affects the sensitive moral consciousness of to-day hardly less painfully than the physical persecution of the Middle Ages. And we are aware, though it may not be prudent to give it language, that in this England of ours, which, more than any State of ancient or modern times, has been true to the cardinal points of Imperialism and Freedom, there are gusts and fluctuations of opinion, sudden stirrings of the calmer air, which may be isolated signs, as obscure and irrational in their appearance as certain facts of meteorology itself, or they may be premonitions of a storm to come—but which in any case give pause to the comfortable complacency of contentment, and remind us, as it is well to be reminded, of that glorious record of our descent which we celebrate every year at Passover.

Of all the races and nations of mankind which quarter the arms of Liberty on the shield of their honour, none has a better title to that decoration than the Jews. Out of a stiff-necked generation, out of its wanderings in the desert, sprang the meekness of spiritual supremacy and the splendour of political

genius, sprang the people which remained a people, united to defend their common good, though they had no territorial possessions, no temporal institutions of sovereignty, no plenipotentiaries at foreign courts. The trumpet note sounded by the poet in the ears of his countrymen at the dawn of the nineteenth century, 'We must be free or die, who speak the tongue that Shakespeare spoke, the faith and morals hold which Milton held', may surely be echoed by us Jews of the language of Moses and the morals of Isaiah. We, too, have had our Pilgrim Fathers. We, too, are trustees of a destiny which transcends the individual life. And therefore it is well to be reminded, through the individual life, by discomfort or pain or anguish in their several degrees, that the process of Jewish assimilation can never be complete till the prophetic vision is realized: 'Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising; . . . for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.' Nothing less than this manifestation can satisfy the people of the Book—no smaller light, no minor prophet. On the altar of no

lower aspiration, to no less exalted a hope, have they offered the willing sacrifice of dispersion, calumny, and suffering.

This alone, in my opinion, is the right point of view from which the believers in the national idea of Judaism should consent to discuss the destiny of their race. As a believing Jew, I refuse to make shift with any instalment of the harvest, or to accept a convenient relief from the present affliction of my people as a dividend in full for the joy which they will ultimately reap. As a Zionist, in the true sense of one who seriously believes that the preservation of the Jews, in defiance of every known law of human ethnology and history, has a meaning which is itself a trust, and who marks with how invariable a purpose the local assimilation of the Jews is time after time arrested by a fresh outbreak of anti-Jewish feeling, which throws them back upon themselves in the moment of their greatest peril from the insidious spread of prosperity —as a Zionist in this sense, I regard with profound distrust that attempt to adapt our national idea to the temporary economic requirements of the various States of Christen-

dom, which has been known during the last few years as 'Political Zionism'. I would say no harsh word of the political Zionists, to whose first leader, Dr Herzl, I paid my humble tribute in the last chapter. Up to the limit of their convictions, they are sincere and unselfish and well-intentioned. The mischief is that their convictions are not adequate to the cause which they defend. Political Zionism, as an instrument of salvation, is not a satisfying culmination to the years of apprenticeship in the desert. It is a disappointing solution to that mystery of the ages, that interminable riddle of history—the survival of Israel in exile—to be told that the end and object of it all is the *Judenstaat* of Dr Herzl's programme. We cannot call it a Restoration of the Jews to be permitted to draft back our outcast poor to Palestine. Zion is the symbol of a larger hope. The 'joy' must be more commensurate to the 'tears'. The ideal, if it is worth labouring for at all, must be conceived in proportion to the suffering of those who served it by waiting. The new Zion must be faithful to the vision of the poet: 'Behold, I will extend peace to her

like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. . . . As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.' What is there of this streaming glory, this mother-comfort of Jerusalem, in the spectacle of Israel's self-appointed leaders refusing to obey the Prophet who bade them seek the peace of the city where they dwell, 'for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace', haggling with a Mahometan Prince for the price of the land in which kings were to come to the brightness of their rising, and drafting into that doomed colony, at the mercy of every revolution in the politics of south-eastern Europe, the pitiable victims of a scheme which is the travesty of Zionism?

We who express these views are reproached with sitting in ease and comfort in England while our co-religionists are being persecuted in Roumania and Russia: the implied reproach is illogical and unfair. I do prefer the fleshpots of Egypt to so pusillanimous a surrender of the hope which sustained my ancestors through centuries of oppression. No Jew can reply for himself alone to the

invitation of the political Zionists. It is not A or B who declines it for his own person or in his own circumstances ; the answer is dictated by the makers of the past to the trustees of the future of Judaism, and, speaking with a consciousness of that responsibility, one may speak without fear of the consequences. Indeed, I would go further, and say that if the true nature of political Zionism—its foundation on a policy of flight and escape, its commercial methods and chimerical statecraft, the measure of its decline from the prophetic ideal, and, I may add, the professed irreligion of some of its most prominent adherents—if these features could be explained to the limited intelligence of the mass of their followers, who are under the spell of the magic of Zion, I venture to think that large numbers of them would prefer even the scanty fleshpots of their particular Egypt—the rigours of an exile such as their forefathers endured—to the alternative proposed to them.

Holding these views, we shall justly conclude that the first obligation incumbent on modern Jews towards the country to which they owe allegiance is that of consistent and

unexceptional loyalty. They should avoid every risk of creating the impression that the loyalty which they yield is conditional on their obtaining a state of their own. This apprehension was sincerely entertained by some honest churchmen in England at the time of the debates on the enfranchisement of the Jews in the reign of King William IV, and it taxed the eloquence of Macaulay to ridicule the idea that 'millennarians'—the Jews who looked forward to the Zionistic millennium—should on that account be excluded from Parliament and office. As long as the hope of Zion is postponed to an era as remote as the dream of human perfectibility, there is nothing to prevent us from fulfilling our duty as citizens; but as soon as that hope is transferred into the material province of purchase and treaty, the question of Jewish patriotism must be seriously reviewed, especially in countries which extend to the Jews a not too willing hospitality. We may continue to pray that the restoration may be brought about in our own time; indeed, I should count no public service complete which did not include that prayer. But for pur-

poses of practical citizenship, we must take our fate as we find it ; and, whether in England or America, whether in Roumania or France, we must build our houses and dwell in them, and seek the peace of the city where we dwell.

Occasions will sometimes arise when a conflict of duties will present itself, when it will be hard to steer an even course between the dual claims of Judaism and patriotism. In the East End of London, and, in a less degree, everywhere throughout England, the elements of such a conflict exist in the controversy about alien immigration. Without referring to the evidence as to the administration of the law, and without examining here and now the various statistics and figures, it will hardly be disputed that those who are all alike descended, in whatever generation, from alien immigrants into England, feel a natural sympathy with victims of harsh treatment in other countries who are following in the footsteps of our forebears. But that sympathy, if we are true Englishmen, is tempered by a just appreciation of the economic conditions of our own country ; and if these

conditions require that the tide of alien immigration, whether owing to the too great numbers of the immigrants, or to their state of too great destitution, or to the defective police supervision of the countries from which they arrive, or to any other cause which renders some of them technically inadmissible as residents on these narrow islands—if and when these conditions require that the tide be checked or controlled, we should reflect very gravely before we give our racial sympathies the prior claim over our sense of the national need. Happily, these instances of conflict, of weighing one claim against another, arise very seldom in Great Britain, and I am not altogether sure if the infrequency of their occurrence is not in itself a good reason to give preferential consideration to the national claim on this occasion. At least, in showing themselves better Englishmen than the English in this matter, and in hastening to appeal to British standards of succour to the oppressed, Jews should be extremely jealous that they are not open to reproach for un-Engish conduct on other grounds.

It may be said that by reclaiming the

Zionistic ideal from the busy hands of the political Zionists, who would shape it here and to-day to a visible end, we are virtually abolishing it altogether from the region of practical politics; and there will not be wanting those who add that our postponement is merely a pretext for abandoning the ideal, and that, being well enough off as we are, we place our millennium in the Greek Kalends. I think we should be on our guard against paying too much attention to cynical criticism of this sort. It is very easy to advance, and very difficult to refute in words. But this at least we may urge, that no honest and thoughtful Jew is ever suffered to forget that, at the best, he is but a sojourner in the land. The intermittent recrudescence of anti-Semitism is now so familiar a phenomenon that it is not fanciful to associate it with that purpose and moral in our history which can be read between the lines of Jewish annals. Till the millennium is reached, till our mission is completed, till the era of Zion recurs—however we may express the proposition—we shall never be well enough off to say finally, our exile is ended. As long

as the moral force of prejudice and the physical force of persecution are manifest, we can never hug the comfortable belief that the end of our wanderings has been reached. And as to the remoteness of that end, if faith cannot bridge the distance, we may summon reason to its aid. The face of the world, even in these doubting times, is not so free from the marks of the fingers of Divine Providence that those who clutch at an unconquerable hope should be reckoned fanatic or insincere. Who, for instance, can cross the threshold of St Peter's at Rome, dedicated to the greater glory of the God who is worshipped through half the earth, and not remember that it is built on the site where Nero in his Circus watched the martyrdom of the early Christians ? Who can stand in the Amphitheatre of Titus, and miss the wonderful reflection that the palace of the spiritual Sovereign of Christendom looks down from the opposite hill on that ruined Colosseum where Christians have been thrown to wild beasts ? And if these miracles—these surprises of history—have been wrought in a few short centuries, is it unreasonable to believe, apart altogether from faith,

that conduct still has its victories to win over prejudice and persecution, before the earth which was created for the development of character has fulfilled its Creator's intention ?

Loyalty to the State, accordingly, is by no means incompatible with a sincere belief in the Restoration of the Jews. But while it is necessary to be clear in our own minds as to what we mean by that belief, and as to why we cannot adapt it to the programme of political Zionism, it is equally necessary, I think, to be clear in our own minds as to what we mean by loyalty to the State. Much interesting evidence was heard by Lord James's Commission, and part of it certainly went to show that the children and grandchildren of aliens tend to become 'quite English' in their habits and their sympathies. One witness, indeed, I recollect, went so far as to suggest that if the Christian and the Jewish Sabbaths could be celebrated on the same day, the whole problem would disappear. According to the Vicar of St Jude's, Whitechapel, the Jewish question in East London would be solved if Christians and

Jews would keep the same day as their Day of Rest. This interesting challenge has not, as far as I am aware, been taken up on the Jewish side; but it touches at so many points a marked tendency of modern Jewish thought, that we may well consider it in connection with the limits that must be set to our practical loyalty to the State. I confess that I regard with apprehension the indications that undoubtedly exist within the Jewish community of a desire to level the barriers that separate the public devotions of Christians and Jews, and we cannot but feel that our own laxity must be somewhat to blame if an Anglican clergyman of Mr Carter's enlightenment and experience can seriously propose that the Jews should adopt the Christian Sabbath as a remedy for an economic evil, which at the worst can be met by extending the operation of local bye-laws. We cannot but feel that it must partly be our own lax Sabbath observance which has prompted this suggestion, with its disproportion between the evil and the cure, on the part of the Vicar of St Jude's, and once more we are reminded that, if Judaism is to

be respected by the State, it must begin by cultivating self-respect. This desire to break down the barriers between the synagogue and the church, or at least between the synagogue and the Theistic chapel, is of comparatively recent origin, and it comes to-day in so attractive a guise and with such strong authority to back it, that I count it one of the most subtle dangers that threaten the correct relations between modern Judaism and the State. It is no part of our duty as Englishmen to abandon the signs and symbols of our religious separatism as Jews ; and this, I take it, is the effect, though it is not primarily the intention, of Jewish services outside the synagogue in which experiments are made towards an external uniformity in the conduct of public worship. Founded in the first instance with the laudable purpose of providing spiritual support for those whom, for one reason or another, the synagogue fails to reach, they result in making the difference between a synagogue and a church so imperceptible to the eyes, alike of the head and of the heart, that the step from the one to the other is very easily taken ; and no weekly homiletics, I

would venture to urge, however eloquent in language and how deeply soever inspired with the true fervour of Judaism, are likely to counteract the visible tendency of such a movement away from the maintenance of the separatism of the Jews. So much stronger is practice than precept.

Instead of assimilating the forms of public worship, which are part of the historical tradition and of the factors of unity in Israel, to those of our non-Jewish neighbours, I would keep the differences between a synagogue and a church so clear and so distinct as to serve as a warning to trespassers. We are, perhaps, unnecessarily alarmed at the increase in the number of mixed marriages. They are probably not more frequent, and not more perilous in their example, than they have been in former generations. But, consciously or not, the advocates of a form of public worship, which is neither wholly Jewish nor wholly Christian, but a kind of cross between the two, do measurably facilitate the passage from one to the other, and in these days of untrammelled social intercourse and of widespread spiritual tenuity, it is impor-

tant to keep as plain as possible that distinction between synagogue and church which corresponds, as every theologian knows, to an ultimate and a characteristic difference in the fundamental conceptions of the two religions and in their outlook upon life and death. I would keep that distinction so clear as to deter a non-Jew, for instance, from marrying a Jewess, or a Jew from seeking a non-Jewish wife.

Let me interpolate at this point a brief reference to the argument which helps to make so many intermarriages, and which may, perhaps, be called the appeal to broad-mindedness. It commonly asks the question, 'Do we not all worship one God?', which it states as the *ne plus ultra* of religious truth. But in this sense, decidedly we do not; or, rather, if the theological quibble must be met, the answer is that the world is not yet ripe for that universal revelation, that Christianity and Judaism have been appointed to prepare for its coming, like the friend of the bridegroom in the parable, each according to its light, and that meanwhile the followers of Jesus and the followers of Moses take separate

roads towards the goal. If any one prefers the other's road let him cross over and use it ; but as engines of human perfectibility each has its set task in the progress of mankind, and neither as yet can say that its work is complete, or that the sanctions by which it regulates conduct have produced among its own adherents such consummate happiness and goodness as to make it a guide to the other. And, again, in this connection, there is the appeal to the good of the State, which is alleged to be benefited in some mysterious way by the intermarriage of Christians and Jews. This argument is adequately met by the researches of statisticians into the history of such unions, for which I may refer to the article on ' Births ' in the third volume of the *Jewish Encyclopædia*.

These apostles of universalism are many centuries in advance of their times. Professor Lazarus acutely writes : ' Israel had to be particularistic in order to formulate and hold up the universal ideal ', and the true Zionists in Israel, the trustees of a civilizing mission which has survived every outrage and assault, though with the progress of that

mission they relax the particularism here and there, still must count themselves separatists in race and separatists in creed if they are to transmit the trust undiminished to their children. To pull down the barriers between synagogue and church is to merge the differences of race and creed, and to sell that birthright for the conventional mess of pottage. It is not right, it is not even expedient, in a kind of access of spurious patriotism, to de-Orientalize our public worship, to make it as uniform as we can with that in the neighbouring chapel, and to familiarize the rising generation of Jews with a form and habit of service which alike by its spirit and by its letter will make them strangers in a synagogue, and which will not be recognized as synagogal by kinsmen of their blood from other lands. England and our neighbours do not demand this sacrifice of our religious individuality. As English Jews, to cut ourselves off from Judaism and from the Jews of other countries on the plea of becoming more English in our public worship, seems to me at least to be patriotism of the kind which is described as more royalist than the King.

The emancipation of the Jews was practically certain to give occasion for tendencies of this kind. But it is a mistake to identify these immature universalist propaganda with the Reform Movement of 1842, which was particularistic from its inception. The Reformers of sixty years ago saw that the Judaism of the Ghetto had inevitably acquired certain traits and characteristics which were not, in their opinion, desirable in themselves, which complicated, instead of simplifying, belief, and which were likely to prove burdensome in the new era of civil liberty. These spiritual fathers, accordingly, founded a Jewish synagogue in which the forms of public worship were relieved from the accretions of the centuries. They drew their inspiration, if I may say so, from the 'pure well of' Judaism 'undefiled', and thus it is not altogether strange to discover their descendants to-day in the seats of the orthodox. It falls to many reformers, as to some Radical politicians, to become conservative in old age—with this difference that, even in hot youth, their desire for change was reactionary, and that, having pruned the mediæval over-

growth, such desire is appeased. It may be that the time has come for a fresh movement of reform, but it should still be on particularistic lines. Emancipation would belie its name if it were incompatible with orthodox Judaism, and Jews in this country, where their physical freedom is greatest, should now make up their minds as to what is essential in Judaism ; for when considerations of State seem to demand the sacrifice of essentials in religion, freedom becomes a mockery, to which the Ghetto is preferable. A conference with this object should be welcome to all, and such a list of essentials would not be very difficult to compile. It would include the Seventh Day Sabbath from evening to evening, as the corner-stone of the Jewish home on which the social system of the Hebrews has been founded. It would include the use of the sacred language in public worship, as the bond of union between Jew and Jew, and partly, too, out of a proper racial pride, that the people who wrote the Bible should read it in the language of its authors. And such a list would include the prayer for the Restoration of Zion, which expresses

and symbolizes our belief in the ultimate fulfilment of our mission. Beyond these essentials I need not enter here, because these three alone have been attacked, in the modern jargon, as ' un-English ', or ' not up-to-date ', and for their lapse alone, so far, have spiritual pretexts been found by some earnest thinkers in our midst. They, at any rate, cannot be suspected of confusing the spiritual plea with what may be called the argument from national convenience. Rather, their error must be sought in their neglect of the truth of human nature that no universal ideal can prove an effective mentor or a stimulating guide to conduct without particular expression, and that these Jewish forms and ceremonies, accordingly, are as essential to the Jewish ideal as hands to nerves. This is the mistake of such thinkers, but the consequence of their mistake is worse. These apostles of Anglican Judaism—to adopt a familiar and a not inappropriate epithet—will have taken upon themselves a very grave responsibility if they divorce the Jewish church in England from the synagogues of the rest of Jewry, and assimilate it in form, and, to some extent, in

substance, to other churches in this country. Israel has always been quickened by great religious ideals, by these its work among the nations must be judged, and pitiful indeed will be the record if history writes against its name: 'This people, which fought for intellectual liberty, became the slaves of national conventions.'

And here we see through a side-light a single aspect of the Jewish Question as it presents itself to the Jews. Every one naturally shrinks from talking of the purpose in his life. He observes an instinctive reticence about his aims and his ideals. He cannot go to and fro boasting of his final hope to leave the world, as the phrase goes, a little better than he found it. By his acts he exalts himself. And what is true of the individual is true of the nation in its degree. We, as Jews, may be moved by dictates of that kind, but it is not for us to say: 'Here we have left our footprint. Here we have practised this virtue. Here we have lived for this hope.' The eulogy may be left to others when the work is done. But it would be a false modesty not to note our successes.

Success never spoils any one if it is taken in the right spirit as a means, and not as an end. Thus, a people that believes in itself should sometimes take stock of its achievement, and little sections of the Jews in England and other countries may fairly congratulate themselves on having achieved a minute part of the great civilizing mission with which they are entrusted as a whole. The contrast between the condition of Jewish society in England in the reigns, say, of Edward I and of the Seventh Edward is an encouragement to the Jewish idealist who contemplates the problem of Jewish society in Roumania or Russia to-day. He does not regard that achievement as a fixed point or an end; at most it marks a step on the road towards his ideal. Another step in this infinite progress, though that still will be very far from the end, will be marked when other sections of the Jews have won a similar victory over the prejudice and injustice of their neighbours; and, deeply as we sympathize with their sorrows and their sufferings meanwhile, gladly as we do all we can to alleviate and remove their burden, we are yet idealists enough to

recognize a purpose in it all. It is not a thing to talk about and boast of, nor to flaunt continually in men's faces, but it is a thing to cling to and to live for, and to save us in our relation to the state from the danger of the two extremes—political Zionism on the one part and religious Anglicanism on the other.

CHAPTER VI

The Function of Hebraism: A Lay Sermon

A LAY preacher's text should be taken from a source in profane literature, and mine, accordingly, is selected from the nineteenth discourse of Sir Joshua Reynolds: 'It is in art as in morals; no character would inspire us with an enthusiastic admiration of his virtue if that virtue consisted only in an absence of vice.'

The generalizations of Sir Joshua are too sane to be quite modern, and here, where he is inveighing against the type of simplicity 'so very inartificial as to seem to evade the difficulties of art', he has happened on a maxim which is, literally, as old as the hills unto which the Psalmist lifted up his eyes. 'Come, children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord . . . . Depart from evil and do good. Seek peace, and pursue

it'. *It is in art as in morals.* The Psalmist and Sir Joshua agree that conduct or painting of so simple a type as to seem to evade the positives of its faculty, does not command esteem. The law of art requires that difficulties be met and overcome ; the law of the fear of God requires that evil be confronted and turned back. But if there is a real relation, or even a fortuitous likeness, between the canons of morality and art, then the Psalter and the Prophets should be studied from an æsthetic point of view. Not merely the beauty of their writing as an accident of form, but the beauty of their teaching as a function of design, should then be researched ; and, consequently, much that has been said, and more that has been acted, on the assumption of an inherent feud between Hebraism and Hellenism might have to be gainsaid, though it could not be undone. *It is in art as in morals*—but since Sir Joshua's day the distinction between Hellenism and Hebraism has been treated by both parties with the authority of the prohibited degrees. Art and morals pursue each its own road to perfection, forgetting that Raphael's countrymen

adored the Madonna whom he painted, and that Pericles praised the very Greeks—in language descended straight from the noblest traditions of Delphi—because their æsthetics were temperate and their philosophy was masculine. The present generation might have been spared many sore offences against taste, moral and æsthetic alike, if ugly morality and unmoral art had not widened the breach between the Greek and the Hebrew ideals. The erotic novel of to-day and the commercialized drama, which rests its vulgar appeal on the splendour of its properties and the crudeness of its sentiment, are not more false to the spirit which should govern modern civilization than the uncompromising morality, whether passively resisting or positively insisting, which alleges that facts are supreme in human affairs, and that practical reason is the last word which the intellectual emotions can state to spiritual faith. Hellenism *plus* Hebraism would have saved the Jews of Amsterdam from expelling Spinoza ; Hebraism *plus* Hellenism would save the artistic temperament from the pitiful spectacle of genius manifest in its eccentricities. As Professor

Butcher reminds us, in his *Aspects of the Greek Genius*: 'It is in the confluence of the Hellenic stream of thought with the waters that flow from Hebrew sources that the main direction of the world's progress is to be sought', and he adds that one of the problems of modern civilization is how to harmonize these tendencies and to combine culture with religion. Thus the scholar tames the reformer, and this is a safer conclusion than that of Matthew Arnold, for example, who would have divided the universe and all the atoms that compose it into Hebraists and Hellenists.

'Lord Beaconsfield, treating Hellenic things with the scornful negligence natural to the Hebrew'—these are the opening words of Arnold's *Literature and Dogma*—in this respect falsely entitled, 'an essay towards a better apprehension of the Bible'—and his *Culture and Anarchy* returned even more savagely to the charge. But 'it is in art as in morals', and Sir Joshua Reynolds's maxim may remind us that there is no Hebrew authority for this separation of the streams. There is Hellenism in the Old Testament, as there is Hebraism in Plato, and those who

are fortunate enough not yet to have tasted the delights of Professor Stewart's edition of *The Myths* [1], may like to sample in this place one or two pertinent sentences from his masterly introduction. Thus he tells us: 'It is good that a man should be made to feel in his heart how small a part of him his head is—that the scientific understanding should be reminded that it is not the Reason—the Part that it is not the whole Man.' And the myth 'appeals to that major part of man's nature which is not articulate and logical, but feels, and wills, and acts—to that part which cannot explain what a thing is, or how it happens, but feels that the thing is good or bad, and expresses itself, not scientifically in "existential" or "theoretic judgments," but practically in "value-judgments" —or rather "value-feelings."' And 'I venture to think that the more we habituate ourselves to the influence of the Poets, the better are we likely to receive the message of the Prophets.' And 'the responses of the oracle are not given in articulate language which the scientific understanding can inter-

[1] Macmillan, 1905.

pret. . . . Their ultimate meaning is the "feeling" which fills us in beholding them; and when we wake from them, we see our daily concerns and all things temporal with purged eyes.' So George Meredith, writing of such a waking in his *Meditation under Stars*, interprets this feeling in terms beyond the compass of the scientific understanding:

Then at new flood of customary morn,
Look at her through her showers,
Her mists, her streaming gold,
A wonder edges the familiar face:
She wears no more that robe of printed hours;
Half strange seems earth, and sweeter than her flowers.

Is this Hebraism or Hellenism? is this Poetry or Truth? and are not the clever shallow critics utterly and miserably at fault when they write of 'the scornful negligence of Hellenic things natural to a Hebrew', and of poetry as an elegant recreation, or an anodyne, or as anything less than a difficult pathway to reality? Thus, as old Sir Thomas Browne wrote, with his rare and humorous judgment, 'thus it is less strange that Homer should Hebraize.'

The æsthetic gems of the Old Testament must be sought for and dug out of the moral

ore in which they are embedded. I submit the accompanying samples from my own very scanty spadework in the Psalter alone, which is enriched with many passages written in the so-called Hellenic spirit, thus traversing the common theory of Israel's paramount submission to twilight and mystic forms of art.

Psalm 8, for example, reflects through the mirror of a monotheistic faith the fearless self-confidence of man in the presence of nature. There is first the order of the universe—the *Kosmos* of the Greeks; and, next, the free thanksgiving of man rejoicing in his might, which, when it occurs in Sophocles, is described as characteristically Hellenic. This psalm should be read in connexion with the opening verses of *Genesis*, where the strophic iteration of the 'goodness' of the Creator's design, culminating in the splendid melody, 'and God saw everything that he had made, and, behold! exceeding good', illustrates the Psalmist's art-perception: 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth.'

The idea of ordered freedom, which we owe gladly to the Greeks—though, socially, it

reached only the first stratum of the Attic State—and which finds political expression to-day in our limited monarchy or monarchial republic, with its democratic institutions, is inherent in such passages of the Psalter as :

The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things ; who have said, with our tongue will we prevail ; our lips are our own ; who is lord over us ? For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord (xii, 3–5).

Let my sentence come forth from thy presence ; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal (xvii, 2).

Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight. (xviii, 23).

More strictly germane to Greek principles of life and art are verses like the following :

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. (xix, 2, 3.)

Many are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward. . . . Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire ; mine ears have been opened :

. . . I delight to do thy will: thy law is within my heart (xl, 5, 6, 8).

Man that is honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish (xlix, 20).

Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us (xc, 17).

And I will walk at liberty for I seek thy precepts (cxix, 45).

These passages might be multiplied—the whole of Psalm 107 should be added—but enough is quoted to show that, allowing for the difference of language as a means of approach, the Psalmist drew from the contemplation of the universe not merely precepts of conduct but canons of the intellect. The reign of order, the consciousness of freedom, the unity of learning, the relation of parts, the dignity of labour, the sanction of beauty—all these conceptions are contained, explicitly or implicitly, in the psalter, and a competent teacher, gifted with a little imagination, could interpret the psalms to his class as æsthetic discipline no less than as moral instruction—as Hellenism and Hebraism combined[1]. Unfortunately, tradition is against

[1] The authority of Sir Philip Sidney, in a passage which has escaped the eagle eye of Mr R. E. Prothero

him. Even the language of the psalter, with its classical nature-imagery, as in Psalms 42 and 126, among very many others, is seldom criticized from the point of view of literary value. There is doubtless much to be said in favour of preserving the Bible from secular uses. But 'it is in art as in morals'; and culture and conduct might both conceivably be benefited if the æsthetics of morality and the ethics of art were given places in our curricula.

This theme, however we approach it, is by no means new. Keat's familiar couplet from the conclusion of his *Grecian Urn* contains a statement of the proposition that the ideal of the good life and the ideal of the

in his *Psalms in Human Life*, may be quoted at this point. Writing in 1581 in his *Apology for Poetrie*, Sidney says: 'And may I not presume a little further to show the reasonableness of this word *vates*, and say that the holy David's psalms are a divine poem? . . . For what else is the awaking his musical instruments; the often and free changing of persons; his notable *prosopopeias*, when he maketh you, as it were, see God coming in His majesty; His telling of the beasts' joyfulness, and the hills' leaping, but a heavenly poesy, *wherein almost he showeth himself a passionate lover of that unspeakable and everlasting beauty to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith?*' I venture to italicize the last three lines.

beautiful life are not separate, but one. And, Ruskin's attack notwithstanding, there is a meaning in the identity. You may do good and love beauty without fear of heresy or idolatry. Goodness need not be ugly, nor beauty unmoral. Morality and asceticism are not necessarily allies : in the perfect life the moralist is also a hedonist ; even in our present imperfect conditions, he should strive to be an æsthete. There is no essential opposition between the tendencies of thought known as Hebraism and Hellenism.

In this connexion I may refer to a book recently published under the title of *The Christ of English Poetry*. It consists of the Hulsean Lectures delivered in Cambridge in 1905 by Dr C. W. Stubbs, and it is rather a pity, from a literary point of view, that the author, in revising his lectures, did not prune them more severely of the technical language of the pulpit. The apostrophic ' Ah, young man ! ' and the hortatory ' Seriously do I beg you to ponder this fact', are , it is respectfully submitted, inappropriate to an inquiry dedicated to Sir Oliver Lodge into ' the witness of the Poets of England ' as ' the most repre-

sentative, the most prophetic, the most clear-sighted, the most deep-hearted men of their time.'

For the witness of the poets to the truths reached independently by the authors of the Scriptures is a far larger subject than Bishop Stubbs has attempted to cope with. It is likewise far more important. An inquiry of that range would take no account of Christ or Antichrist in one or other of the religious communities; it would illustrate the consentaneity between profane and sacred writers in the sphere of the intellectual imagination; and if it established that agreement, it would add evidence of considerable value to the authority of the Bible, which laymen dispute more and more on the plea of its dogmatic bias. I mean this: when the Bible says, 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name on all the earth', the ordinary layman's tendency, if he be rationalistically inclined, is to object that the words suggest no conclusion to his mind and carry no sanction with them, because a Biblical writer is professedly a theist. But if the poets could be called as witnesses to the Bible, and if they be proved, on examin-

ation, to confirm the statements of that Book, the ordinary layman's objection of theological bias would be ruled out of court. Certain other current negations would suffer under the same rule. The argument against religious instruction, based on the alleged untruthfulness of the Biblical method of presentation, would have to be extended to cover the English poets, if the poetic method of presentation were shown to be essentially similar to that of Biblical writers. The uncompromising 'conscientious objector', who declares that his children must not learn falsehoods, and that nothing, therefore, must be taught in schools which would not convince the rational intelligence of an average adult—which is not syllogistically demonstrable—would find that his interdict covered fable, fairy-tale, and poetry, as well as the Bible itself; and the modern *Index Expurgatorius*—surely the most remarkable reversal which the whirligig of time has brought about—would include the 'Poets of England', as well as the authors of Holy Writ, who are *ex hypothesi* past praying for by the worshippers of reason.

The Bishop would have done good service to the cause of the use of imagination in human affairs—its use, not merely its ornamental properties—if he had employed his theme of 'the Christ of English poetry', not so much to extract from Langland, Shakespeare and Browning passages of more or less direct Christological tendency, as to establish the identity of the approaches to truth chosen respectively by the Bible and by poetry. The Bishop confuses himself in courageous but hopeless efforts to christianize Shakespeare's humanity, though not the least wonderful fact in the whole complex of that genius is Shakespeare's obvious indifference to the religious struggle which was all around him and about him. Dr Stubbs is reduced to telling us as pertinent to 'the Christ of English poetry' in the age of Elizabeth, that

'If the Christian in Shakespeare was not the real man, we should have expected, at least, that the Pagan would have spoken more frankly. . . . Shakespeare becomes the prophet of Christian truth to his age, and a witness, therefore, to Christ and Christianity. . . . Shakespeare's new emphasis on the importance of the individual man and woman gave

to the Christian principle of Individualitya root as deep as the bottom of things, and endowed it with a sovereign authority in history.'

All this may or may not be correct—it is certainly only partially true—but it is not what the lay reader looks for from the title of the book. A volume which should successfully expand Dr. Stubb's somewhat timid sermons into a genuine survey of the ground common to poetry and religion—how each is the other even in its own despite—would be valuable at all times and invaluable at the present moment. Every religious system, Judaism included, is virtually on trial just now. The criterion of reason is being applied to it, and the Crichtons of that code are not very tolerant of facts which do not happen to be demonstrable. That there are many facts of this more intangible kind, and that they form to many of us the safest refuge from the uncertainties of human reason, and the only refuge from its errors and its terrors, are, in the opinion of these rationalists, signs—vanishing, they believe—of a weak or of a deranged intellect. But add the poets to the Bible as witnesses to the truths of imagination;

show that, though they use different metaphors, yet they speak the same language; pile their spoils of the emotions on the Biblical trophies of conduct, join beauty to grace—the cult of the humanities to the ethical lessons of the Scriptures—and the voices of earth and heaven will rise in unison to assert the seriousness of religion's claim.

Hebraism, in other words, has a message to deliver, a vital function to perform, under modern social conditions, and it is a defensible corollary that modern Jews must prove themselves the trustees of that mission. I am leaning so heavily in this chapter on the aid of stronger men, that I need not apologize for referring to a passage in, perhaps, the most ingenious but certainly the least effective of Matthew Arnold's writings. It occurs in *Celtic Literature*, where Arnold is discussing, in a vein particularly congenial to himself, the comparative success and failure of *The Golden Treasury* and *The Book of Praise* respectively. He discovers the cause to lie in the displacement of the Semitic age of man by the Indo-European: 'whereas the Semitic genius placed its highest spiritual life in the religious

sentiment, and made that the basis of its poetry, the Indo-European genius places its highest spiritual life in the imaginative reason, and makes that the basis of its poetry' ; so, when we defy this law, and try to pour modern verse into Semitic vessels, 'our poetry leaves the true course, and must reveal this by not speaking a living language'. It is rather heavy artillery to bring into the field of criticism, even in the excellent cause of F. T. Palgrave's anthology ; but the one point which stands out clearly is the imperious need of expression for that quality which was 'religious sentiment' and is now 'imaginative reason'. The need is greater every year, as the modern Indo-Europeans—we ourselves more simply—grow further apart from the world's Semitic age. We have to watch with keen apprehension the disappearance, or supersession, of the standard of intellectual imagination. Meredith and Watts upheld it in the generation which is passing away, and each is less popular and exerts less influence to-day than the obvious allegorists of the Hall Caine type in fiction and the Frederic Leighton type in painting.

On every side we see the need of Semitic—or Hebraic—ideals, to correct the defects of Hellenism. Hellenism is declining before our eyes. In its intellectual aspects it hardens into rationalism and positivism; in its moral aspects it weakens into sentimentalism. The worship of 'sport' at the universities and public schools, among the 'flannelled fools' of Mr. Kipling's denunciation; its not less dangerous analogues in inferior strata of society, in evidence whereof I might summon the far more serious indictment of Dr. Shadwell's *Industrial Efficiency*[1]; the anarchical campaigns conducted under the banner of liberty in favour of manhood suffrage, the enfranchisement of women, free thought, free love, and so forth; the relaxation of individual effort and the consequent dependence on all kinds of state socialism; the reluctance to arm authority with discipline; the growing selfishness of class-interests: in these ways and others we mark the hardening of the Hellenic standard of intellect and the softening of the Hellenic standard of conduct. The brilliancy of the one appeals to

[1] Longmans, 1906.

no canon but human reason; the wide interests of the other suffer for lack of concentration. In all this Hebraism is wanted; its place and function are defined. The Hebrew conception of charity—to select a single virtue—differs *toto cælo* from the quality which passes by that name among certain humanitarians of to-day. It includes the encouragement of self-help, thrift and self-respect. Hebraism is a steadying force, adding power to conduct and emotion to intellect. To Hebraism are confided the forces which will ultimately re-act against the diffuseness, the tolerance, the unimaginativeness of the present generation. *It is in art as in morals*, and the people which gave morality to the world should have the courage to assert and to uphold the assertion in their lives, three practical precepts:

> The unmoral is not beautiful,
> The unruled is not free,
> The not-beautiful and not-free is not true.

The first of these precepts gives us art, whose god is Beauty; the second gives us conduct, whose god is Hygeia—health, bodily and mental; and the third gives us truth,

whose god is God. It matters little or not at all under which system of human thought we seek truth in our lives. Those who inherit the system which the Old Testament conveys, and who reject from their inheritance all attempts at continuation or completion—professing Jews, in other words—have a method at their disposal which is simple, uniform and direct, and which possesses a language as adequate as any to the subject with which it deals. Its comparative immunity from fixed dogmata of 'belief' confers a further advantage which the system has been swift to use in the descent through the centuries—it appeals to feelings, not to facts, and whenever it avails itself of facts, in its concrete dealings with humanity, it appeals through such shifting facts to a feeling beyond:

> They are the vessel of the Thought.
> The vessel splits, the Thought survives.

For the God of Hebraism must include Beauty and Hygeia; or, rather, where these are not, the Hebrew forgets his God. And when the spirit of the age tends to relax all bonds, when tolerance runs away, when luxury

creeps in, when indifference enervates, then that religion is a sham which pretends to cultivate truth on holy-days and sabbaths, while it neglects art and conduct in the workshop and the playground. Art which 'evades its difficulties' and conduct which surrenders to self-indulgence are alike irreligious: the one is ugly, the other unhealthy, and these are parts of untruth. Here, therefore, is the function of Hebraism in the age in which we live. To uphold, 'in art as in morals', the standard of the God of truth, and to oppose, in art and conduct, false taste and ignoble aims, is an ideal faithful to Jewish teaching and valuable to English practice. We Jews are too prone to believe that good taste lies outside the Pale.

THE END